HISTORY OF THE FREEDOM MOVEMENT IN INDIA

R. C. MAJUMDAR
M. A., Ph. D.

BOOK TRADER

HISTORY OF THE FREEDOM MOVEMENT IN INDIA

VOLUME I

BY

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DEDICATED
TO THE MEMORY OF THOSE
WHO LIVED AND DIED
FOR
THE FREEDOM OF INDIA

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PREFACE

It may appear somewhat strange that having devoted myself for more than forty years exclusively to the study of ancient Indian history, I should have undertaken, at the fag-end of my life, to write the history of the freedom movement in India. It is, therefore, necessary to say a few words about the genesis of this book. I gave a brief account of it in the Preface to my book, *The Sepoy Mutiny and the Revolt of 1857*, published in April, 1957. Since then the Government of India have published the first volume of the *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, written by Dr. Tara Chand, which gives an altogether different version. In his Preface Dr. Tara Chand says that the idea of writing a history of the freedom movement "emanated from the late Maulana Abul Kalam Azad," Minister of Education, Government of India, and when "he asked me to take up the work I gladly accepted the offer" (pp. xii. xiii). In the Foreword to this book Janab Humayun Kabir, Minister for Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs, has given a short account of the early history of the project. He contradicts Dr. Tara Chand when he says that "at the very first meeting of the Indian Historical Records Commission held after India became free, a resolution was passed for preparing an authentic and comprehensive history of the different phases of the Indian struggle for independence. This recommendation found an immediate response from the late Maulana Abul Kalam Azad who directed that steps should forthwith be taken to give effect to it" (p. vii). He then briefly describes the various steps taken by the Government over a period of four years before a Board of Editors was finally entrusted with the task in 1953. But even Janab Kabir's account, though

a great improvement upon the cryptic statement of Dr. Tara Chand, is very sketchy, inaccurate and misleading.

I have therefore thought it necessary to bring together in an Appendix to this Volume all the relevant facts on this subject, so far as they are known to me. The Appendix will give a clear idea of the part I took in compiling a history of the freedom movement in India, and how all my labours were lost by the unceremonious rejection of my draft, not by the Board, an autonomous body, for which and under which alone I worked, but by the Government of India which dissolved the Board with effect from 1 January, 1956, and took upon itself the task of writing the history.

Along with others interested in the subject, I expected that the Government would soon make some arrangement to complete the work left unfinished by the Board. But we had to wait long before it was announced that Dr. Tara Chand had been commissioned to write the history of the freedom movement in India. I have referred in the Appendix to Dr. Tara Chand's elaborate note on the subject, and I was under no illusion as to the nature of the history that would be written by him. As everyone has now a full opportunity of judging for himself the quality of Dr. Tara Chand's work from the first volume already published by him, I need not make any comment on it. But being convinced that his plan of the history was radically different from mine, I immediately decided to write a history in my own way, so far as I could do it within the limited resources at my command. Fortunately, the materials compiled by the Board, to which I no longer had any access, have been mostly published by the different State Governments which originally supplied them, and some of those who worked for the Board have published the labours of their study and research in the form of books and articles. I have fully utilized these with full

acknowledgment in all cases. Nevertheless, I had practically to write the whole history anew and to work single-handed. I could not hope to produce a voluminous and comprehensive work such as I could have done with the help of the materials collected by the Board and the financial resources at its command. But as an offset to this I had one great advantage. I have written with complete freedom, untramelled by the vacillations and varying moods of the Board to which reference has been made in the Appendix.

I have approached the subject from a strictly historical point of view. It is an ominous sign of the time that Indian history is being viewed in official circles in the perspective of recent politics. The official history of the freedom movement starts with the premises that India lost independence only in the eighteenth century and had thus an experience of subjection to a foreign power for only two centuries. Real history, on the other hand, teaches us that the major part of India lost independence about five centuries before, and merely changed masters in the eighteenth century. How this fact has materially affected the course of the freedom movement in India has been shown in Book I, Chapter III.

I propose to deal in this book only with the movement for freedom from the British yoke, as the struggle for independence during Muslim rule by the Rajputs, Marathas and Sikhs, among others, is now treated as a part of the general history of India. I am not therefore confronted with the problem which perplexed the official historian Dr. Tara Chand, namely, "where should the history begin ?" I have followed the obvious course of beginning with the hostile reactions against the British conquest ; only, by way of introduction, I have added a very brief summary of the events leading to the establishment of British rule and the condition of the people prevailing at the time, such as would be necessary for a proper understanding of

the freedom movement.

Nor have I been troubled with the other problem posed by Dr. Tara Chand, namely the difference or distinction between 'the history of the freedom movement' and 'the story of the achievement of independence'. I have merely indicated the process by which India threw off the yoke of the British, and traced the various stages through which it passed. In doing this I have necessarily to deal with the manifold developments in Indian life which accompanied the process or helped and accelerated it. But I have always kept before me the achievement of political independence as the central theme, and everything else as mere ancillary to it.

This book is not a history of the British rule in India, but only of the movement to put an end to it. As I have viewed it, the struggle for independence had four distinct phases. The first was an impotent rage, on the part of certain classes and communities, against the imposition of British authority, which gained momentum with the actual experience of the sundry evils of British rule and the miseries caused thereby. It led to sporadic attempts to throw off the British yoke and armed resistance on a small scale in various localities all over India. These isolated acts formed a background to, and culminated in, the great outbreak of 1857 which, together with the organized armed rebellion of the Wahabis to restore Muslim supremacy (1850 to 1863), may be said to have ended the first phase of the struggle. The drastic manner in which both the revolts were put down caused such a terror and demoralization that armed revolt against the British authority ceased to be regarded as practical politics. The delineation of this phase, which covers exactly a century (1763-1863), is the main theme of Book I of this Volume.

The second phase began almost as soon as the first ended, though grounds were prepared for it half a cent-

ury before. It was marked by the growth of patriotic and national sentiments, chiefly due to English education and the contact with Western culture brought about by it. There was almost a revolutionary change in every sphere of Indian life, ushering in what is usually designated the Renaissance, and the intellectuals, or more properly the English-educated classes, now dominated the field. Hindu society, religion, literature, etc. underwent such a transformation in course of one century as was not probably witnessed during the preceding thousand years. So far as politics was concerned, it was changed almost beyond recognition. Western ideas of patriotism and nationalism, hitherto unknown in this country, gradually made their influence felt, and the ideal of the British democratic system of government animated the people. Anger and hostility towards the British rule were replaced by devotion and loyalty to the British throne, based upon implicit faith in the benevolence and liberalism of the British people. Armed resistance was replaced by political organization and constitutional agitation. The vision of a united India as a self-governing dominion within British Empire dominated the newly awakened political consciousness of the people. This phase in politics also witnessed the emergence of Indian nation out of a congeries of races, communities and heterogeneous peoples who occupied the geographical region known as India. This second phase, which roughly covers the period 1860-1905 though its seeds were sown before, is dealt with in Book II, or the concluding part of this Volume.

The next Volume, comprising Book III, deals with the transformation of Indian political ideas of the second phase by the impact of nationalist ideas. The old spirit of faith and devotion to the British was rudely shaken, and constitutional agitation was denounced as mendicancy which produced no result. The political goal was now clearly defined as *Swaraj* or Home Rule, and instead of

fruitless appeals to the British, the people decided to rely on their own efforts. This phase may be said to have begun with the *Swadeshi* movement in Bengal in 1905 and ended with the death of Bal Gangadhar Tilak and the emergence of Mahatma Gandhi as the leader of the unarmed national revolt (1920).

The third and concluding Volume deals with the national struggle from 1920 to 15 August, 1947, when India achieved independence. This phase is almost wholly dominated by the personality of Mahatma Gandhi, except during the last five years when he lost the leadership, though not his great popularity, prestige and power. From this point of view the fourth or last phase may be fittingly designated the 'Age of Gandhi'. Its principal characteristic is the new technique of struggle adopted by him which, though not altogether unknown before in India, was never employed on such a wide scale as a practical measure to force concessions from unwilling hands.

Having given some idea of the general nature of the *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, of which this forms the first Volume, I shall now offer an explanation of some special features in it in order to disarm hostile criticism.

There are some obvious difficulties in writing a history of the freedom movement in India only fifteen years after it was achieved, and by one who has himself passed through the most eventful period in it, covering the third and fourth phases mentioned above. We are all too near the events to view them in their true perspective. I have been a witness to the grim struggle from 1905 to 1947, and do not pretend to be merely a dispassionate or disinterested spectator ; I would have been more or less than a human being if I were so. My views and judgments of men and things may, therefore, have been influenced by passions and prejudices. Without denying this possibility, I may

claim that I have tried my best to take a detached view. On the other hand, I possess certain advantages also in having a first-hand knowledge of the important events and the fleeting impressions and sentiments they left behind on the minds of the people. It is difficult to form a proper idea of these by one who, living at a later period, has only to rely on the record of the past in order to reconstruct its history. Although these reflections do not directly concern the present Volume, indirect influence cannot altogether be ruled out. I have therefore tried to place before the reader all the relevant facts, leaving them to form their own conclusions. As the feelings and impressions of a class or community, whether justified by facts and events and reasonable or not, are of great significance in history, I have, wherever available, quoted at some length views of representative persons whose names carry some weight. As illustrations I may refer to the lengthy extracts from the writings of Raja Rammohan Roy and other Hindu leaders (pp. 33 ff., 54 ff.), Syed Ahmad and other Muslim leaders (pp. 479 ff.), and W. S. Blunt (pp. 468 ff.) in order to give a first-hand account of the feelings entertained by the Hindus and Muslims towards each other. It is a very important topic in the history of India's struggle for freedom. For Muslim intransigeance in placing communalism above nationalism—as the Hindus chose to call it—in twentieth century Indian politics, which ultimately led to Pakistan, can only be properly understood, rationally explained, and even sympathetically viewed by a Hindu, only if he cares to study seriously and objectively the relations between the two communities, as they developed in the nineteenth century. But so much passions and prejudices have gathered round the question that merely a general picture, though accurate and authentic, is not likely to carry conviction, and the best way to deal with it seemed to be to quote the views and statements of eminent contemporary persons who had

ample opportunities of knowing the truth. The extent of general ignorance on the subject may be gathered from the fact that today the Indians regard M. A. Jinnah as the father of the two-nation theory, oblivious of the fact that it was propounded, and repeated times without number, by Syed Ahmad and his followers more than half a century before. The lengthy extracts from Blunt's diary give an idea of the Muslim feelings towards the Hindus before Aligarh Movement, such as it would be difficult to get from any other source within easy reach. The Hindu-Muslim relation in the present century is *the* topic of the day which no Indian ever regards without interest and few without prejudice. I have, therefore, tried, even at the risk of repetition and digression, to draw a realistic picture of it in the nineteenth century in order that the momentous events of the twentieth may be looked upon in true perspective.

The outbreak of 1857 has also been dealt with at some length. For, apart from its intrinsic importance, it has been claimed to be the first national war of independence, and the discussion of this topic is, therefore, of special importance in the history of the freedom movement. In 1957 I wrote a separate book on this subject—*The Sepoy Mutiny and the Revolt of 1857*—and intended it to form a part of the *History of the Freedom Movement* which I then contemplated to write. But as this book was sold out within six months of its publication, and a number of new books on the subject have since appeared, I thought it best to give a somewhat detailed account of the topic in this Volume. Of course, for a more comprehensive and critical account I would invite a reference to my book, a revised and enlarged edition of which is in contemplation. Even in the comparatively brief account contained in this Volume I have given elaborate details of the outbreaks of the civil population. For, in any discussion of the question

whether the revolt of 1857 was the first national war of independence or not, the real character of the outbreaks of the civil population must be the decisive factor. A detailed statement of actual facts, based on authentic sources, is calculated to give a more accurate and definite idea on the subject than any amount of abstract theory or argument. The officially sponsored Centenary Volume of the Mutiny does not contain sufficient details of this nature, and hence I thought it necessary to add them to counteract the current view that the outbreak of 1857 was the first national war of independence. I have tried to show, with the help of the details given, that it was neither 'first', nor 'national,' nor 'a war of independence.'

As the part played by the outbreak of 1857 has been unduly exaggerated, the role of Wahabi movement in the struggle for freedom has been unduly minimised. I have tried to explain its real significance in the light of the researches carried on by Dr. P. N. Chopra, to whom I take this opportunity to express my obligations.

In Book II, which deals with the factors that brought the Indian nation into being, Bengal looms large, and as I have narrated in the Appendix, this formed the chie indictment against the draft I prepared for the Board of Editors. I have no doubt that criticism on the same line will be directed against this book. I do not like to add anything to what I have said on pp. 30-31, and draw the special attention of my readers to the observations of Jadunath Sarkar quoted on p. 31. After all, history is no respecter of the feelings of persons and communities, and one cannot alter the facts of history. The ideas of nationalism, patriotism, and political organization on Western lines were first developed in Bengal, and then spread to the rest of India. This is a simple historical truth which older generations of political leaders like Dadabhai Naoroji, D. E. Wacha, B. G. Tilak and G.

K. Gokhale have all emphasized. The mere fact that the author of this book happens to be a Bengali should not stand in the way of expressing this truth out of a false sense of modesty. It is a truism that parochialism should not influence an author's judgment. What it really means is that parochial feeling must not lead him either to exaggerate or to minimize the value or importance of the part played by the narrow geographical region to which he might belong. Both are *equally* wrong. His views and statements should be judged by the normal canons of criticism and must not be discredited offhand on the gratuitous assumption of partiality for his own people or province. I leave it to the readers to judge for themselves whether the role attributed to Bengal is right or not. I may be wrong, due to ignorance, particularly of the language and literature of other parts of India, or error in judgment, and I shall be the first to admit it if I am convinced by facts and arguments; but I shall fail in my duty as a historian if I desist from stating what I believe to be true, simply out of the fear that it will be set down to parochialism. If I have laid an undue stress or emphasis on any point or aspect, I shall welcome a challenge which, if supported by facts and arguments, is bound to advance or correct our knowledge of history, and thereby do a great deal of good.

Similarly, I have not hesitated to speak out the truth, even if it is in conflict with views cherished and propagated by distinguished political leaders for whom I have the greatest respect. The history of the Hindu.-Muslim relations may serve as an illustration. Political exigencies gave rise to the slogan of Hindu-Muslim fraternity. An impression was sought to be deliberately created that the Hindus and Muslims had already shed so much of their individual characteristics, and there was such a complete transformation of both and a fusion of their cultures that there was no

essential difference between the two. Though every true Indian must ever devoutly wish for such a consummation, it was, unfortunately, never a historical fact. Sir Syed Ahmad, M.A. Jinnah and other Muslim leaders who never believed in it entertained more realistic views in this respect than either Mahatma Gandhi or Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. To accept as a fact what is eminently desirable but not yet achieved, though perhaps attainable by prolonged efforts, is not only a great historical error, but also a political blunder of the first magnitude, and often leads to tragic consequences. So it has been in the present case. The Hindu leaders deliberately ignored patent truth and facts of history when they refused to recognize the fundamental differences between the Hindus and Muslims which made them two distinct religious, social and political units. The consequence was that no serious effort was ever made by the Hindu leaders to tackle the real problem that faced India, namely how to make it possible for two such distinct units to live together as members of one State. Whether the solution of such a problem was within range of practical politics, no one can say today with any degree of certainty. But with the examples of Canada or Switzerland before us, the attempt was worth making. But such an attempt was never made in India, as the existence of two such fundamentally different political units was never fully realized by the Hindu leaders. Even today the Indian leaders would not face the historical truth, failure to recognize which has cost them dear. They still live in the realm of a fancied fraternity and are as sensitive to any expression that jars against the slogan of Hindu-Muslim *bhai bhai*, as they were at the beginning of this century, Verily the Bourbons are not the only people who ever forgot the past and never learnt any lesson even from their own history. I yield to none in a genuine desire to promote communal harmony and amity. If I have violated the political convention of the

day by revealing the very unpleasant but historical truth about the relations between the Hindus and Muslims, I have done so in order to elucidate and explain the course of events in the past, not unmingled with the hope that our leaders would draw some useful lessons for the future. In any case, I may assure my readers that I have done so with good will to both the communities and malice to none, being convinced that the solid structure of mutual amity and understanding cannot be built on the quicksands of false history and political expediency. Real understanding can only be arrived at by a frank recognition of the facts of history and not by suppressing and distorting them. These considerations have prompted me to discuss Hindu-Muslim relations in a correct historical perspective. Be it also remembered that such a discussion is indispensable in order to offer a rational explanation of the birth of Pakistan.

As already mentioned above, this book is not meant to be a history of the British rule in India; but a correct knowledge of it is essential for a proper comprehension of the movement to destroy it. I have dealt with the general history of British rule in Volumes IX, X and XI of the *History and Culture of the Indian People* to be published by the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay. As a matter of fact these three Volumes may be regarded as complementary to my three Volumes of the *History of the Freedom Movement in India.*

As this book is meant for general readers I have not used any diacritical marks. It has also been a very difficult task to devise any uniform method of writing Indian names. The name of Surendra Nath Banerji, for example, is written in no less than six different ways, and though for the sake of uniformity I chose the above form, he himself used a different one. The Bengali epithets like Ghosh, Bose, Mukherji and Banerji are written in

different ways. I have deliberately avoided the forms Rammohun and Aurobindo, though sanctified by usages, because they seem to be too much anglicised, and adopted the more normal forms Rammohan and Arabinda.

A complete bibliography will be given at the end of the third Volume which will probably be out before the end of 1963. I take this opportunity to convey my thanks to the Natun Press for having printed this Volume in less than six months' time. Thanks are also due to my daughter Srimati Sumitra Chaudhuri, B. A., for having prepared the Index. I crave the indulgence of the readers for some printing mistakes that have crept in, but as these may be easily detected, I have not added any correction slip.

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BOOK I

SPORADIC OUTBURSTS AGAINST THE BRITISH RULE

CHAPTER I

ESTABLISHMENT OF BRITISH RULE

1. DISSOLUTION OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE

The death of Aurangzeb marks a turning point in the history of India. When the great emperor breathed his last at Ahmadnagar in A. D. 1707, the Mughal empire had reached its largest extent. It included practically the whole of Northern India up to the border of Assam on the east, and extended up to the Hindu Kush mountains on the west. In the Deccan he had finally conquered and annexed the old independent States of Bijapur and Golconda, the remnants of the once mighty Bahmani kingdom, and carried his victorious arms as far as Tanjore in the south. The independent, but tiny, Maratha State maintained only a precarious existence in the fastnesses of the hills. There was no organized power anywhere in the vast sub-continent of India which seemed to have even the remotest chance of measuring its strength against the power of the Mughals with any chance of success.

But like the rolling waves in the sea the mighty Mughal empire reached the highest point only to break down. In less than a quarter of a century after the death of Aurangzeb, the Marathas became a strong military power and a formidable rival to the Mughals. They established their supremacy over a large part of the Deccan and South India and carried their plundering raids even to Northern India, with the result that nearly the whole of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, and Orissa passed into their hands. The further break-down of the Mughal empire set in with the assumption of virtual independence by the Governors of provinces like the Deccan,

Bengal and Avadh, and the disintegration was completed by the invasion of Nadir Shah in 1739.

When, in 1740, the Peshwa marched with his troops to the vicinity of Delhi, the mighty fabric of the Mughal empire had entirely collapsed. A *roi faineant* still sat on the throne at Delhi with the titles and pretensions of his imperial ancestors. But his political authority was not recognized beyond that city and its immediate neighbourhood, and his court was a hotbed of intrigues and conspiracy leading to revolutionary outbreaks.

During the quarter of a century that followed Nadir Shah's invasion, momentous changes took place in Indian politics. The Marathas grew more and more powerful and made a bold bid for the empire of India. At last they conquered the whole of the Panjab, and their vanguard reached the Sindhu. Thus the great Shivaji's dream of an all-India empire under the Marathas was fully realized.

But the good fortune of the Marathas did not last long. The conquest of the Panjab was a challenge to the power of Ahmad Shah Abdali, and it was not long before he invaded India. For reasons it is not necessary to discuss here in detail, the Marathas proved unequal to the task of defending their vast empire, and were disastrously defeated by Ahmad Shah Abdali in the Third Battle of Panipat (1761). This defeat is one of the main causes of their decline and downfall, and though they renewed their imperial policy, the dream of establishing an all-India empire practically vanished for ever.

Not long after the Third Battle of Panipat the Marathas lost for ever the political solidarity they had enjoyed under the early Peshwas, and the vast Maratha dominions were practically divided into five autonomous States under the Peshwa, Bhonsle, Gaekwar, Sindhia and Holkar. These five ruling families, with their capital cities respectively at Poona, Nagpur, Baroda, Gwalior and Indore, and specially the last two, were still great powers, but they did not follow any

common policy and looked more to their own interests than those of the Marathas, far less of India as a whole.

Before leaving the topic of the Marathas it is necessary to draw attention to the claim made on their behalf that their aim was to establish a 'Hindu Raj' on the ruins of the Mughal empire. There are good grounds to believe that some such idea was present in the mind of the great Peshwa Baji Rao I, and he openly preached the ideal of '*Hindu Pad Padshahi*' (Hindu empire). This ideal evidently helped him a great deal, as the Hindu *Zamindars* and ruling chiefs showed active sympathy with the Maratha cause. But unfortunately, this ideal was not systematically pursued, and seems to have been altogether given up by his successors. As an evidence of this we may quote two positive facts. In the first place, when the Marathas invaded Bengal during the reign of Alivardi Khan, they terribly oppressed the Hindus and Muslims alike. Contemporary Bengali records seem to indicate that the Hindus of Bengal at first regarded the Marathas as deliverers from the yoke of the Muslims, but the incredible atrocities perpetrated by the Marathas completely alienated the Hindus from them. Secondly, it is a well-known fact that far from enlisting the sympathy and support of the great Rajput Chiefs, the Marathas terribly oppressed them and made them their enemies. Nor did they try to be friendly with the Sikhs and the Jats. These things indicate that the ideal of founding a Hindu empire on the ruins of the Mughal empire cannot be regarded as the basis of the foreign policy of the Marathas.

It is further to be noted also that although the Marathas at a later date fought hard against the British, they were not unwilling to join them against other Indian powers. An instance of this is afforded by the overtures made by the Maratha Chiefs to the English Government at Fort William in Bengal, proposing a joint action against the Nawab of Bengal, and offering very advantageous terms

to the English.[1] The alliance of the Marathas with the British against Mysore points in the same direction.

II. THE EUROPEAN TRADING COMPANIES.

After the decline of the Marathas there was no Indian power that could hope to establish political supremacy. The three succession States of Hyderabad, Avadh, and Bengal were each powerful in its own way, but none had the capacity or ambition to take the place of the Imperial power they had successfully defied. There remained only the European trading companies, but nobody at that time could possibly dream that they were, either jointly or severally, in any way equal to the task of replacing the Mughals or the Marathas.

But, however incredible it might appear to the people of those days, it was actually one of these trading companies that ultimately established a mightier empire in India than that of the Mughals. In view of this important event which took place at a later date, it is necessary to review at some length the position of European trading companies during the first half of the 18th century. We need not trace their earlier history, but must note a few facts which appear significant in the light of later events. As the bases of these companies were far away, beyond the sea, in distant Europe, and a communication with Home involved a risky voyage of many months, they could not reasonably hope to establish any political position in India of sufficient importance, nor achieve any military strength capable in any way of coping with the ruling powers of this country. Nevertheless, they seem to have been fully conscious of their own military strength based upon a superior degree of skill and discipline, and were inspired by an ambition to acquire territorial domination and political power.

These ideas may be traced back to the Portuguese, the first European traders who settled on the soil of India towards the close of the fifteenth century A. D. They relied for the security of their trade on the power of the sword. As the Governor of Goa said in 1545, 'they came to India with a crucifix in one hand and a sword in the other, and the real spirit of their rule was typified by a figure sculptured on the Viceroy's arch at Goa,—that of a saint whose foot was on the neck of a prostrate Indian and whose hand held a drawn sword pointing towards India'.[2] The Dutch, who followed the Portuguese, adopted a more strictly commercial attitude, but they also realized that their factories had to be defended by forts. Thus, though their objective was merely trade and not any territorial domination or political power, they had to erect several forts. In course of time it was necessary to secure the neighbouring land in order to protect these forts. This was the thin end of the wedge which ultimately led to territorial dominion. As Lord Palmerston very truly remarked : "The original settlers began with a factory, the factory grew into a fort, the fort expanded into a District, and the District into a Province."

But neither the Dutch nor the Portuguese were destined to play any important role in Indian politics in the critical days following the dissolution of the Mughal empire. During the period undet review, i.e., the first half of the eighteenth century, only two of the European powers became prominent factors in Indian politics. These were the English and the French. Although originally they were mere trading companies, circumstances compelled them to take up political activities and increase their military strength. It is also interesting to note that though outwardly they appeared to be too insignificant from military or political point of view, they themselves held quite ambitious ideas regarding their potentialities. Reference may be made in this connection to a letter written by Gerald Aungier, President of the English

factory at Surat and the Governor of Bombay since 1669, to the Court of Directors. In this letter he remarked that "the times now require you to manage your general commerce with your sword in your hands."[3]

The Directors also approved of this change in policy and wrote to their President and Council on 12 December, 1687, "to establish such a Politie of civil and military power, and create and secure such a large revenue to secure both ... as may be the foundation of a large, well grounded, secure English dominion in India for all time to come".[4]

In pursuance of this policy the English blockaded Bombay and other Mughal ports on the western coast, and seized many Mughal vessels in December, 1688. But the Mughal empire was still very strong and the English had to appeal for pardon to Aurangzeb, who granted it (February, 1690).

This shows that even in the palmy days of the Mughal empire, the English Company, in spite of its very meagre resources, dared challenge the authority of the Mughals, and no doubt this was mainly due to a deep-rooted conviction in heir minds that the military skill and discipline of the Indian army was much inferior to theirs. This conviction continued even after their discomfiture, but they had to wait till the dissolution of the Mughal Empire, half a century later, before a suitable opportunity presented itself for reviving the aggressive policy.

This was the prolonged war between the English and the French in the eastern region of South India, known in history as the Carnatic War. This war must be regarded as of great importance in shaping the imperial policy of the English which ultimately enabled them to establish their dominion in India. It is not necessary for our present purpose to relate the main incidents of the war. It is sufficient to state that England and France took opposite sides in a war in Europe, and as a natural consequence, the British and

the French Companies in India were also involved in war. During the First Carnatic War, which began in A.D. 1742 and continued for a period of about six years, the English settlement of Madras was captured by the French. The Nawab of the Carnatic, in whose dominion Madras was placed, tried to prevent the French, but was assured that they would restore the city to him as soon as it was captured. But the French were not in a mood to do so after they were in possession of the city. Accordingly the Nawab blockaded the city, but although the number of troops under him were considerably larger, he was badly defeated and was forced to retreat. This defeat of the mighty host of the Nawab by a handful of French soldiers convinced Dupleix, the French Governor, that the Indian army was no match for a European army, or even an Indian army trained under European methods.

During the Second Carnatic War (1750-54 A. D.) the English and the French took opposite sides to help the rival claimants for the thrones of Hyderabad and Carnatic. At first the French were successful in placing their own nominees on both the thrones. The grateful ruler of the Deccan appointed Dupleix Governor of all the Mughal territories to the south of the Krishna river. A French army was maintained at his court and valuable territories, known as Northern Circars, were ceded to the French for its maintenance. But thanks to the energy and strategy of Clive, who first came into prominence during this war, the English ultimately came out victorious. Although the French maintained some influence in the Court of Hyderabad, the English placed their own nominee, Muhammad Ali, on the throne of the Carnatic. As the Nawab was entirely dependent on the British, the latter became virtually master of the province. This position helped them a great deal in their subsequent adventures in Bengal.

But before we turn to this episode it is necessry to

emphasize the three important discoveries during the Carnatic War which paved the way for the establishment of British rule in India. The first, already referred to above, was the hopeless incompetence of massive Indian army when pitted against European military skill and discipline. The second was the ease with which the European trading companies could not only recruit native soldiers ready to fight against their own countrymen, but also impart to them skill, discipline and efficiency of European troops. The third was the possibility of deriving important political and commercial privileges by taking sides in a contest between rival claimants for a throne.

The first was due to the insular character of the Indians who did not keep abreast with the advance in military strategy outside India. The second was rendered possible only because there was no national feeling among the Indians. The third is easily explained by this absence of national sentiments together with the lack of political foresight among the Indian leaders, and the rise into power of upstarts who were merely guided by greed and personal ambition.

But howsoever we might explain the three important facts noted above, the lessons which they taught were not lost upon the English, who remained the only strong and stable European trading company in India after the Second Carnatic War. This is evident from the subsequent history of their activities in Bengal, where they achieved conspicuous success by practical application of the three important discoveries noted above. The credit for these discoveries is usually given to the French, notably Dupleix. It is, however, interesting to note in this connection that similar ideas independently occurred to James Mill, in the service of the Emperor of Germany, who, in 1746, presented a scheme for an expedition against Bengal and dethroning its Nawab. He started

with the following analysis of the political and military condition of Bengal :—

"The policy of the Mughal Court is bad; his military worse, and as to Marine power, to command and protect his coasts he has none at all............A conquest might be made with as much ease as the Spaniards overwhelmed the naked Indians of America.................

"Bengal is at present under the domination of a rebel subject of the Mogul's.........It is equally indefensible with the rest of Hindustan on the side of the ocean, and consequently may be forced out of rebel's hands without any violation of right ; and if forced out of his hands under a declaratory intention of restoring it to the Mogul, instead of furnishing matter of complaint, it would be a matter of so much merit, as might justly challenge any acknowledgement and any consideration."

Mill held the view that 1500 or at most two thousand regulars with shipping and stores were sufficient for this undertaking. He accordingly proposed such an expedition and suggested that the King of England should be invited to help it.[5]

Mill's theory was never put to practical test, but it is undeniable that he anticipated, to a large degree, the bold policy which was carried to a triumphant conclusion by Clive only eleven years later. This episode may now be treated in some details.

III. ESTABLISHMENT OF ENGLISH RULE IN BENGAL.

The political condition in Bengal was very favourable for the British. In 1740 A.D. Alivardi, the Governor of Bihar, rebelled against his overlord, the Nawab of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, defeated and killed him, and ascended the throne at Murshidabad, the capital of the

province. He was soon involved in a war with the Marathas who frequently made plundering raids in Bengal. It was with great difficulty, and after spending a great deal in men and money, that he could enter into some sort of agreeement with them. On his death in 1756, without leaving any male issue, he was succeeded, according to his desire, by Siraj-ud-daulah, the son of his second daughter. His position was challenged by both the eldest daughter as well as the son of the third and youngest daughter. Though Siraj subdued all this internal rebellion without much difficulty, he was soon involved in a quarrel with the English trading company in Bengal whose headquarters were in Calcutta.

It is not necessary to go into the vexed question regarding the relative merits of the two parties, namely Nawab Siraj-ud-daulah and the English, in their denouncement of each other. The fact is that Alivardi's mind was disturbed by the course of events in South India and he grew nervous of the growing power of the English and the French in the Coromandel coast. He advised Siraj to be on his guard, and the latter had a just cause of grievance against the English as they were supposed to have been partisans of the eldest daughter of Alivardi in her contest with Siraj for political power. Siraj-ud-daulah therefore naturally took umbrage when the English mounted guns on the Fort William in Calcutta and also built additional fortifications, not only without his permission but even without his knowledge, and paid no heed to his open protest. A second cause of affront was given by the English when they gave shelter, in Calcutta, to a son of Maharaja Rajballabh who was a partisan of the eldest daughter of Alivardi. This open defiance of the Nawab is best explained by the assumption that the English were induced to believe that in the contest for the throne after the death of Alivardi his

eldest daughter, and not Siraj, had the greatest chance of success. Unfortunately, as stated above, she was easily forced to submit, and was practically made a prisoner by Siraj, who then demanded of the English that the son of Rajballabh should be sent to him. This the English refused to do. Siraj invaded Calcutta, the British surrendered, and most of them fled. It is not necessary to give further details of this conflict between Siraj and the English. It is sufficient to state that after the capture of Fort William by Siraj the fugitive troops from Calcutta took refuge in Falta, a few miles lower down the river Ganga; and while the Nawab returned to his capital and remained inactive, British forces were sent to Bengal from Madras under Col. Clive and Admiral Watson. These forces easily retook Calcutta as the Nawab's general there fled without offering any resistance. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that he was won over by bribe, and possibly the Nawab grew suspicious at this time of all his officers. This alone can satisfactorily explain why he proceeded to Calcutta and, in spite of the great provocations offered by the British, humbly sued for peace and concluded the treaty of Alinagar (9 February, 1757), practically conceding all the demands of the English. About this time the Seven Years' War in Europe led to the outbreak of hostilities between the English and the French in India. Clive accordingly desired to take the French factory at Chandernagore, about thirty miles from Calcutta. Siraj, who naturally desired to balance the power of the British in Bengal by a strong French force, asked the British to abstain from hostilities against the French. He maintained the very sensible position that the English and the French being both traders within his dominion, it was his duty to maintatn peace between them, and none of them should take law in their own hands. It was about this

time that some leading men in the court of Siraj formed a conspiracy to dethrone him and place his Commander-in-Chief, Mir Jafar, on the throne. The conspirators naturally approached the English to help them, and Clive decided to take advantage of this to get rid of the hostile Nawab. He rightly concluded that the Nawab was not at heart friendly to the English, and he could not overlook the danger of a French force from the South joining the Nawab against them. It was essential for the interests of the English in Bengal that its ruler should be an ally and not an enemy. So Clive joined the conspiracy against Siraj and, as a preliminary step, decided to extinguish the French power in Bengal. Accordingly the English attacked Chandernagore. The Nawab had stationed a force at Hooghly under Maharaja Nandakumar to stop the advance of the English against Chandernagore, and also sent a big army from Murshidabad to help him. But Nandakumar was evidently bribed by the English ; for he not only made no resistance to the English army, but also induced the other army of the Nawab to follow the same policy. The result was that Chandernagore was easily captured. The defeated French were offered shelter by the Nawab. But he was ultimately induced by the English to send them away. It is difficult to understand why the Nawab did so, in spite of the open defiance of his order by the British in capturing Chandernagore. It is probable, though by no means proved by conclusive evidence, that he had got some inkling of the conspiracy against him, and thought of appeasing the English by withholding his support from the French. But whatever may be the reasons, the Nawab's action proved ruinous to him. By dismissing the French who were the only power in a position to help him, he placed himself entirely in the hands of the conspirators

of his court. In the meantime, the English concluded a secret agreement with Mir Jafar and the rich banker Jagat Seth. Mir Jafar promised not to take part in the ensuing fight on condition of succeeding Siraj as the Nawab. He also offered other privileges to the English in return for their help. Siraj, unaware of all this, made humble submission to Mir Jafar who promised him full support in the coming conflict against the English. Accordingly Siraj advanced with his army to Palasi (Plassey) and halted there. Clive with his small army encamped in the neighbourhood. The battle took place on 23 June, 1757. Only a small part of the Nawab's army actually took part, while the bulk of the army under Mir Jafar held aloof. But even the small army of the Nawab bravely advanced against the British and made the position very hot for them. Although Mir Madan, one of the two generals of the Nawab, was killed, the other, Mohan Lal, continued to advance and the situation of the British became precarious.

At this juncture Mir Jafar advised the Nawab to stop the fighting for the day, so that he might engage the English with his whole force the next morning. The Nawab accepted the advice and ordered Mohan Lal to retreat. Mohan Lal at first protested and refused to obey the order, but the Nawab persisted, and ultimately Mohan Lal turned his back. This was a signal for the advance of the British and the disorderly retreat of the tiny force of the Nawab who took part in the fight. The day was lost, and the Nawab fled from the battlefield. He reached Murshidabad and tried to raise an army, but failed. He then fled from Murshidabad towards Patna with a view to joining the Erench.

In the meantime Clive hailed Mir Jafar as the Nawab of Bengal, and their joint forces reached the capital city of Murshidabad. There Mir Jafar was proclaimed Nawab

with due pomp and ceremony, and soon news arrived about the capture of Siraj. Siraj was brought back to Murshidabad and then beheaded by the order of Miran, the son of Mir Jafar. It is difficult to decide whether this brutal action was done with the knowledge or connivance of either Mir Jafar or Clive, or both.

The death of Siraj practically ended the period of independence for Bengal. It is not necessary to describe in detail the steps by which the English gradually became the virtual masters of Bengal, and only a brief indication of the main stages of this important evolution must suffice.

The accession of Mir Jafar did not change the form of Government. In addition to a large amount of money, paid partly as compensation for the losses suffered by the English in 1756 and partly as reward to Clive and others, the East India Company was granted the sovereignty over Calcutta and revenue right over the territory south of Calcutta, known as the Twenty-four Parganas.

But though there was no other change in outward appearance, the new Nawab, unable to defend him against internal rebellions and invasion by Ali Gauhar, the son of the Delhi Emperor, found himself entirely dependent upon the British support for maintaining himself on the throne, and soon became a mere puppet in their hands. It therefore hardly caused any surprise when the English forced him to abdicate in favour of his son-in-law, Mir Kasim (1760 A.D.). The latter granted the districts of Midnapore, Burdwan and Chittagong "for defraying the expenses of the English troops employed in the defence of the country," and made a gift of twenty lakhs of Rupees to the Governor and other members of the Council.

Mir Kasim made a serious effort to re-organize his army on the English model, so that he might be indepen-

dent of British support, which inevitably meant British control. But he was involved in a quarrel with the British over the question of transit duties which soon led to an open war (1763 A.D.). The Nawab's forces were successively defeated at Katwa, Gheria and Udhuanala, and the cities of Monghyr and Patna fell into the hands of the English. Mir Kasim, forced to leave Bengal, sought the help of the Emperor Shah Alam and the Nawab of Avadh (Oudh). The allies were, however, defeaed by the English at Buxar, as will be narrated in the next chapter.

The British overran Avadh and captured Lakhnau and Allahabad. Mir Kasim became a homeless wanderer and died in obscurity. As soon as war broke out with Mir Kasim, Mir Jafar had once more been proclaimed the Nawab and he not only confirmed the territorial grants of Mir Kasim but also made important concessions in regard to transit duties, and this perpetuated the abuses which ruined the trade and industry of Bengal. When Mir Jafar died, early in 1765, his son, Najm-ud-daulah, was allowed to succeed on certain conditions, embodied in a regular treaty (20 February, 1765). Under the terms of this treaty the military defence of the country was to be entirely in the hands of the English, and the Nawab was only permitted to keep so many troops as would be necessary for the collection of revenue and administration of justice. Besides, the Nawab bound himself to choose, by the advice of the Governor and Council in Calcutta, a Deputy who, under the appellation of Naib Subah, should have the entire management of all the affairs of Government, and not be removable without their consent.

Shortly after this Clive negotiated separate treaties with the Nawab of Avadh and Shah Alam, the Emperor. On payment of fifty lakhs of Rupees, the former received back all his territories with the exception of Allahabad

and Corah (the neighbouring tracts of lands) which were bestowed upon Shah Alam. The Nawab of Avadh and the English engaged to afford assistance, in case the territory of the other was invaded. The Emperor granted by a *firman* the *Dewani* of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa to the East India Company on payment of an annual tribute of twenty-six lakhs of Rupees (12 August, 1765). The Emperor also confirmed to the English all the territories which they actually possessed throughout the nominal extent of the Mughal empire.

The successive treaties briefly mentioned above made the English the real master of Bengal, Bihar and that part of Orissa which formed part of Bengal Subah.

The framework of the old administration was kept up for some time. But gradually the Nawab was divested of all administrative powers and had to rest content with an annual pension, the amount of which was gradually reduced from time to time.

Duging the administration of Warren Hastings as the Governor of Bengal (1772-85) the English became *de facto* rulers of the Province.

The treaty with the Nawab of Avadh also created Avadh a buffer State, dependent upon the British. This was the thin end of the wedge by which through successive stages extending over nearly a century, Avadh was made an integral part of the British dominions.

IV. THE CAUSE OF ENGLISH SUCCESS.

The consolidation of British power in Bengal paved the way for the expansion of their dominion all over India. But before describing this development it is necessary to make a few general observations on the course of events leading to the establishment of British supremacy in Bengal.

The decision of Clive to dethrone Siraj-ud-daulah has been regarded as singularly audacious, and a unique adventure

But before accepting this view it is necessary to remember that similar success was almost within the grasp of Dupleix. We might also remember that long before Clive's *coup d ' etat* in Bengal, the political condition of the province had induced another military adventurer of Europe to elaborate a similar plan to obtain possession of this kingdom, though the circumstances were much less favourable at that time. For, instead of a young, inexperienced and unpopular Nawab just ascending a contested throne, Bengal was then under a vigorous and powerful ruler, Alivardi Khan, who had established his rule firmly over the whole province.

We have already treated this episode of James Mill in some detail in order that the English plan of obtaining political supremacy in Bengal might not appear either altogether impossible or even a very novel one. In any case, Clive had far greater resources than Mill could ever hope to secure, and was in a much more advantageous position than this unknown adventurer acting on his own authority.

The success of a small foreign trading company in establishing political supremacy in India has generally been regarded as strange or wonderful, and has even been described as miraculous. These te ms are applicable only in the sense that such an event has probably never occurred before. But it is not 'miraculous' in the sense that it defies rational explanation. This will be clearly understood if we refer to the political condition of India which rendered such a success not only possible, but even quite probable.

In the first place, it is to be remembered that the establishment of the British rule in Bengal was not really a foreign conquest, that is to say, conquest of Bengal by England, but rather the result of an internal revolution. It is a general law of history that whenever there is a dissolution of an empire, a struggle follows between such

organized powers as remain in the country, and ultimately the most powerful of them sets up a government. After the dissolution of the Mughal Empire, to which reference has been made above, this general law also operated in India. Everywhere the minor organized powers tried to make themselves supreme, and the contest was usually decided by mercenary bands of soldiers, led by either a provincial Governor of the Mughal Empire or by some adventurer. The Governors of Avadh, Bengal and Deccan offer examples of the first type, and Hyder Ali is an instance of the second. Now, among the different powers in India about this time there were also two trading European Companies, and it is not unnatural that they should also join in this struggle for power, particularly in view of what has been said above regarding their pretensions based on their military strength. As a matter of fact, a calm reflection would show that the East India Company had as much or even greater chance of success than an adventurer of the type of Hyder Ali.

"Hyder Ali had nothing but his head and his right arm, and he became Sultan of Mysore. For mercenary armies were everywhere and they were at the service of everyone who could pay them or win an influence over them; and anyone who commanded a mercenary army was on a level with the greatest potentates of India, since in the dissolution of the authority the only force left was military force,"

The only drawback of the East India Company, as compared with Hyder, was that it was a body of foreigners. But this did not make any practical difference, for they could easily enlist Indian soldiers almost to any extent. As a matter of fact, the proportion of Indian to European soldiers in the army of the Company was at that time more than seven to one. On the other hand, the East India Company had several other advantages. "It had

a command of money and was backed by the State of England. It had two or three fortresses, and the command of the sea. Besides, whereas the success of an adventurer depends mainly on his personality and its fruit seldom lasts after his death, the East India Company had the advantage of being a Corporation, that is, it was not liable to be killed in battle or to die of a fever."[6]

It is not really very surprising that a mercantile corporation with such resources would be able to compete with other adventurers. But when we remember that it could bring into the field European military science and generalship, and was backed by the whole power of England and directed by English statesmen, its success in outstripping all its competitors ceases to be miraculous, and in any case becomes less strange or wonderful than the success of an adventurer like Hyder Ali.

If we survey the course of events narrated above, and particularly the composition of the army of the East India Company, it will appear quite clear that the political supremacy of the British in Bengal cannot be regarded as the conquest of this province by England. It was an internal revolution in Bengal politics, and is to be compared to similar success, in the past, of one individual in establishing his supremacy against his rivals in a struggle for power which inevitably ensues when a settled government breaks down and political anarchy sets in.

Referring to the composition of the Company's armies which won successive battles, it has been justly remarked by an English historian that "India can hardly be said to have been conquered at all by foreigners. She has rather conquered herself."[7] But such a strange phenomenon calls for an explanation, and will be discussed in detail in a later chapter. Here it is sufficient to state that at the time of which we are speaking, there was no India in the political

sense. It was a mere geographical expression, and was therefore easily conquered by a foreigner just as Italy and Germany were conquered by Napoleon. There was no national feeling in at least the greater part of India, as there was none in Germany and Italy. Nor had India any jealousy of the foreigners, because she had no sense whatever of national unity ; because there was no India and, therefore, properly speaking, no foreigner.[8]

But although there are analogies in the history of Europe, for example Germany and Italy in the days of Napoleon, there is one respect in which there was a greater degree of political degeneration in India than even in those countries. Napoleon was able to set one German State against another ; he could induce the ruler of Bavaria to furnish a contingent to the army which he led against Austria ; but he did not make the attempt to raise an army of Germans, simply by offering pay, and then use them in the conquest of Germany. It is doubtful if such an attempt would have been successful. But, unfortunately, that was really the case with India. We shall discuss in the next chapter why it was so, but there is no doubt about the fact. And once we recognize this fact, and the total lack of national feelings, at least in Bengal and Madras, the success of the East India Company in establishing its supremacy over these regions is easily explained.

V. ESTABLISHMENT OF ENGLISH RULE IN MADRAS

The collapse of the French power in the Third Carnatic War left Muhammad Ali, the protégé of the English, in undisputed possession of the Carnatic as an independent ruler. His position, *vis à vis* the English, resembled that of Mir Jafar in Bengal. For the English laid stress upon the fact that the whole burden of the war had devolved upon them, and that even now Muha-

mmad Ali was not in a position to maintain his authority without their support. But although the situation was thus an exact parallel to that of Bengal under Mir Jafar, and the sequel was in both cases the same, viz., the complete absorption of the country within British dominion, the intermediate stages were somewhat different. It is not necessary to trace them in detail, and it will be sufficient to indicate a few landmarks in the successive deterioration in the position of the Nawab and gradual ascendancy of the British.[9]

Before the surrender of the French in Pondicherry the Nawab and the English had agreed on certain terms, the most important of which was an annual payment by the former of twenty-eight lakhs of Rupees in liquidation of the sums "for which in the course of the war he had become responsible". But within a short time the Nawab was forced to pay fifty lakhs of Rupees, a large part of which he had to secure on loan, on most disadvantageous terms. The cup of Nawab's humiliation was full when, in spite of his strong opposition, the English negotiated a treaty between him and the ruler of Tanjore whom he considered as his vassal. When the Nawab refused to ratify the treaty, Mr. Pigot, the President of the Madras Council, "is said to have seized his chop or seal, and applied it to the paper with his own hand."[10]

Next, the Company suggested that in order to defray the military expenses, four districts should be granted to them. The Nawab not agreeing to it, "the President began to pass from the tone of suggestion to that of requisition." Unable to escape compliance, the Nawab asked for a written agreement and sent a draft. The President "sent back the agreement unsigned, with strong marks of his displeasure, and told the Nawab by letter, that it ill became the situation in which he stood to make conditions with the Company," since "they", said he, "do not

take anything from you; but they are the givers, and you are a receiver (August 13, 1763)."[11]

In spite of these humiliations the Nawab left Arcot and spent his days in a magnificent palace at Chepauk, in the suburb of Madras. To meet the extravagant expenses of his luxurious living, he borrowed money from Englishmen, including Company's servants, at exorbitant rates of interest, sometimes rising as high as 36 per cent. per annum. This introduced a new complication into the affairs of the Carnatic. As the English bond-holders derived huge profit from the debts of the Nawab, it was their interest to keep him in possession of his territory. Thus during the war with Hyder Ali of Mysore an agreement was concluded on December 2, 1781, by which the revenues of the Carnatic were assigned to British control, and the Nawab got only one-sixth for his maintenance. But at the insistence of the creditors of the Nawab, the Board of Control restored the revenues to him. Again, during the war with Tipu (1790-2) the entire administration of the Carnatic was taken by the Company into its own hands, but at the close of the war the Carnatic was restored to the Nawab. Thus the complete transference of Carnatic to British control was delayed mainly by the interest of the English bond-holders, and the dual control continued till the end of the century.

Lord Wellesley, however, decided to remove this "festering sore" once for all. After the Fourth Mysore War he held that both Muhammad Ali and his son and successor, who died on 15 July, 1801, had carried on treasonable correspondence with Tipu Sultan, and thus this son's son had forfeited the right to the throne of the Carnatic. He concluded a treaty with another grandson of Muhammad Ali, named Azim-ud-daulah, who was made nominally the Nawab of Carnatic, but surrendered the entire civil and military administration of the province into

the hands of the Company, and merely received a pension amounting to one-fifth of its revenues.

Wellesley's action has been characterized by some as a high-handed one, while others have vindicated his policy. The truth of the charge of secret intrigue of the Nawabs of Carnatic with Tipu Sultan may be justly doubted. It is also held on good authority that Wellesley at first offered to the legitimate heir to the throne the same terms which, on his refusal, were offered to, and accepted by, Azim-ud-daulah.[12] This proves the hollowness of the pretence for disqualifying the former for succession to the throne of his ancestors. But there is hardly any doubt that the annexation of the Carnatic to the British dominion was a logical consummation, long overdue, which had hitherto been prevented by a series of extraneous circumstances.

The Northern Circars, consisting of Ganjam, Vizagapatam, Godavari, Krishna and Guntur districts, originally granted by the Nizam to the French for the payment of their troops in his service, were ceded by him to the English in 1766 as a price of help against Hyder Ali. The territories conquered from Tipu Sultan in course of the Third (1790-2) and Fourth Anglo-Mysore Wars (1799), added to the Carnatic and Northern Circars, constituted the nucleus of the British Province of Madras. The narrow gap between the English possessions in Bengal and Madras was filled by the cession of the districts of Cuttack and Balasore by the Bhonsla of Nagpur in 1803 A.D after his defeat by Wellesley in the Second Anglo-Maratha War.

VI. EXPANSION OF BRITISH DOMINION IN INDIA.

With the consolidation of its power in Bengal and Madras, the East India Company became the greatest

territorial power in India, and the further expansion of its dominion was merely a question of time and opportunity. Something also depended upon the character and policy of the Governor-General.

The authorities in England were generally averse to further expansion of their dominion in India, and while many of the Governors-General tacitly followed the policy as far as practicable, some pursued a more aggressive design in spite of directions to the contrary. Among these architects of British Empire in India three stand foremost, namely, Lord Wellesley (1798-1805), the Marquess of Hastings (1813-23) and Lord Dalhousie (1848-56).

Wellesley's first endeavour was to secure control over the two neighbouring dominions of the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Nawab of Avadh. By offering assistance to the Nizam against the Marathas and Mysore, the English had gradually obtained great influence and secured valuable privileges from him. Finally, Wellesley induced the Nizam to conclude a treaty of Subsidiary Alliance in 1798. By this treaty the Nizam agreed to maintain a body of British troops at his expense, expel his European officers of other nations from his territory, and guide his relations with the foreign countries according to the direction of the English. Thus, while retaining autonomy in internal administration, the Nizam became, to all intents and purposes, a subordinate ruler of the British.

Wellesley's method of securing dominion in Avadh was less straightforward, but more effective The English had obtained a strangle-hold over that kingdom by the military establishment permenantly retained there at the expense of its ruler, whose chronic bankruptcy, due mainly to his own extravagance and British exactions, afforded facilities to them to perpetuate and gradually increase the effective exercise of their authority, even in internal administration. Wellesley first made a demand

upon the Nawab to disband his own forces and increase the Company's troops. As soon as the reluctant Nawab was forced to accept this demand, Wellesley compelled him to conclude a treaty in 1801 by which nearly half the dominions of Avadh, comprising Rohilkhand and the fertile tracts of the Lower *Doab* between the Ganga and Yamuna, were surrendered to the British.

Wellesley next turned his attention to the two great powers in India which could effectively oppose the English, viz., Mysore and the Marathas. Mysore was invaded in 1799. Tipu was defeated and killed, and his dominions were partly annexed and partly converted into a subordinate State under a Hindu ruler.

By his Subsidiary Alliance with the Peshwa (December, 1802) Wellesley established the political authority of the British over the heart of the Maratha dominions. The war with Sindhia, Bhonsle, and Holkar which followed as a consequence of this step, enabled him not only to wrest vast territories from them in Central, Western and Upper India, but also to establish political supremacy which gradually reduced them to the position of the Nizam. The titular Emperor of Delhi, Shah Alam, a protégé of Sindhia, now came under English protection.

In addition to the major annexations mentioned above, Wellesley annexed the two small principalities of Tanjore in the south and Surat in the west. The rulers of both these States were forced to hand over the entire administration to the British in return for an annual pension.

The Marquess of Hastings, who assumed the office of Governor-General only eight years after Wellesley left, followed a deliberate policy of aggressive imperialism. He was determined "to render the British Government paramount in effect, if not declaredly so," and to "hold the other States vassals in substance, if not in name." He forced the Maratha States to make important concessions.

The Peshwa had to renounce formally his headship of the Maratha Confederacy, give up his claims on the Gaekwar for four lakhs of Rupees, and to cede to the English Konkan and some important strongholds. The Sindhia had to give up his right over the Rajput States beyond the Chambal, which now came under British control. The Bhonsle had to sign a treaty of Subsidiary Alliance.

Chafing at these humiliations forced upon them, the Marathas made a final attempt to shake off the yoke of the British. The Peshwa's army of 26,000 men attacked the small British army of 2,800 at Khirki (1817), but was completely defeated. The Bhonsle and Holkar also rose in arms, but were defeated by the English, respectively at Sitabaldi and Mahidpur (1817).

The Third Maratha War (1817-8) was short but decisive. The Peshwa, being defeated in two more battles which he fought at Koregaon and Ashti in 1818, surrendered to the British. He retired on a pension of eight lakhs, and settled at Bithur near Kanpur. His territories passed into the hands of the British and formed the nucleus of the Province of Bombay. Only a small part of it round Satara was formed into a kingdom and given to a lineal descendant of Shivaji.

The Bhonsle Chief, Appa Sahib, fled after his defeat. His territories lying to the north of the Narmada were annexed by the British, and a minor grandson of Raghuji Bhonsle II was made the ruler of the remnant of the State. The Holkar had to give up all claims on the Rajput States and cede to the British all his possessions south of the Narmada. He also agreed to maintain a subsidiary force and place his foreign policy under British control,

Lord Hastings also declared war against Nepal. By the treaty of Sagauli (November, 1815), which concluded it, the Nepal Government agreed to receive a

British Resident at Katmandu, withdrew from Sikkim, gave up their claims to the lowlands along their southern frontier, and ceded to the English the western districts of Garhwal and Kumaon.

Lord Hastings gave evidence of his sense of imperial obligations by waging a ruthless war of extermination against the Pindaris and Pathans who had been harrying vast tracts in Central India for many years.

The Rajput States in Western India had been reduced to a miserable condition by the aggressions of the Marathas, Pindaris and the Pathans. The suppression of these powers enabled Lord Hastings to take the Rajput States under British protection. The value of alliance with the Rajputs, ignored by the Marathas, was fully realized by the British Governor-General. He was convinced that such an alliance would mean "immense strategic advantages for the Company's military and political position in Central India," and would place at its disposal "the resources of the Rajput country, for defensive and offensive purposes, against the internal as well as external enemies of the Company." So he concluded a series of treaties with different Rajput States in 1817 and 1818, on the basis of "defensive ailiance, perpetual friendship, protection and subordinate co-operation." One by one, the proud Rajput States accepted British suzerainty and sacrificed their independence for protection. The kingdom of Bhopal and many minor States of Malwa and Bundelkhand also did the same.

Thus, when Lord Hastings left India in 1823, the British Empire in India was established on a secure basis. The lineal descendant of Babur and Akbar, who still sat on the imperial throne of Delhi, was a mere puppet in the hands of the British. The States that arose out of the ruins of the Mughal Empire—Bengal, Avadh, Hyderabad, Mysore and the Maratha principalities—

as well as the Rajput clans whose history goes back to pre-Muslim days, all formed parts of the British dominions or were in varying degrees of control under them. There were no States outside the British Empire or its sphere of influence between the Himalayas and Cape Comorin, save and except the Panjab and Sindh on the west and Assam on the east.

Assam, including Manipur, formed parts of the kingdom of Burma. As a result of war with Burma which broke out in 1824, the Burmese surrendered Arakan and Tenasserim, withdrew from Assam, Cachar and Jaintia, which were ultimately annexed by the British, and recognized Manipur as an independent State. Manipur, however, had to accept the British suzerainty for all practical purposes. Sindh was annexed in the most high-handed manner without the least justice or provocation.

On the north-western frontier the British maintained friendly relations with Ranjit Singh, ruler of the Panjab. By a treaty with him in 1809 the Sikh States to the east of the Sutlej came definitely under British control. The death of Ranjit Singh (1839) was followed by a state of political anarchy and confusion in the Panjab, and a war broke out between the British and the Sikhs in 1845. The Sikhs were successively defeated in several battles and forced to accept humiliating terms (1846). Dalip Singh, the minor son of Ranjit, was recognized as the ruler of the Panjab, but it was effectively brought under English control. The peace with the Panjab, however, did not last long, and a second Anglo-Sikh War broke out within two years. In spite of the heroic fight at Chilianwala, the Sikhs were decisively defeated at the battle of Gujarat, and Lord Dalhousie, the new Governor-General, annexed the Panjab to the British dominions (March, 1849).

By defeating the king of Burma in a battle that was practically forced upon him, Dalhoushie annexed Pegu

and thus extended the frontier of the British Empire up to the Salween (1852).

Dalhousie, who thus completed the establishment of British Empire in India, annexed a number of States which had hitherto maintained autonomy in internal administration. Satara, Nagpur, Jhansi, and a number of minor States were annexed by him by the application of the famous 'Doctrine of Lapse', as their rulers died without leaving any natural heirs.

The last great annexation of Dalhousie was that of the kingdom of Avadh in 1856, on the ground of misrule of the Nawab. Avadh underwent the longest process of gradual absorption extending over nearly a century, since the Battle of Buxar in 1764. Its annexation may be said to close the old era of British aggression, for the great outbreak of 1857 and the assumption of Indian sovereignty by the Queen Empress, a year later, introduced a change in the policy of the English. The policy of annexation was definitely given up, and the only notable exeption is the conquest of Upper Burma as a result of the Third Burmese War in 1885, completing the annexation of the whole of Burma.

In the Queen's proclamation of 1858, the Indian States enjoying internal autonomy were recognized as sovereign States, and regarded rather as allies than subject to the British. But the Act of 1876 by which Queen Victoria assumed the title of Empress of India with effect from 1st January, 1877, legally made the rulers and the people of these States mere vassals of the British Empire. In practice it made little difference, but in theory the change was really very great. This Act made the British legally the Paramount Power in India.

CHAPTER II

THE CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

Having traced the course of circumstances which led to the establishment of British rule in India, it is necessary to review, at some length, the condition of the people, particularly with reference to their political outlook and consciousness of a national feeling. Such a study is specially important for a proper understanding of the form and nature of India's efforts towards the improvement of their political status, which culminated in their achievement of freedom from the British yoke. For, as will be seen later, there was no conscious struggle on a large scale, on the part of the people, for such freedom until quite a late period, and India had to pass through various stages in the political evolution of the people before there was a deliberate demand for this freedom and an earnest fight to secure it at any cost. The whole course of this political evolution was largely determined by the general condition of the people at large, and specially the level of their political consciousness at the beginning of British rule.

A study of this subject should begin with Bengal. For it was the first Province in India to feel the impact of English education and Western culture, which formed the most important factor in the political evolution of India in the nineteenth century. Here we can study the beginnings of those ideas and ideals, forces and movements, which sooner or later appeared in other parts of India, and not unoften radiated from this centre, or were at least deeply influenced by it. It would be hardly any exaggeration to say that the evolution in Bengal formed a basic pattern for the rest of India, so

that a study of Bengal in the nineteenth century would not only facilitate a similar study of other regions of India, but seem to be a necessary precursor to it. The following observations of Sir Jadunath Sarkar may be quoted in this connection :

"If Periclean Athens was the school of Hellas, 'the eye of Greece, mother of arts and eloquence,' that was Bengal to the rest of India under British rule, but with a borrowed light, which it had made its own with marvellous cunning. In this new Bengal originated every good and great thing of the modern world that passed on to the other provinces of India. From Bengal went forth the English-educated teachers and the Europe-inspired thought that helped to modernise Bihar and Orissa, Hindustan and Deccan. New literary types, reform of the language, social reconstruction, political aspirations, religious movements and even changes in manners that originated in Bengal, passed like ripples from a central eddy, across provincial barriers, to the furthest corners of India".[1]

During the first half of the eighteenth century A.D., as in earlier periods, Bengal was, economically, perhaps the most flourishing Province in the whole of India. Its fertile lands made it agriculturally rich, while its trade and industry enjoyed an unusual prosperity. The most important among its manufactures was the textile goods, specially muslins, which were celebrated all over the world.

Almost every year a large number of Persians, Abyssinians, Arabs, Chinese, Turks, Moors, Jews, Georgians, Armenians, and merchants from some other parts of Asia poured into Bengal, and purchased ship-loads of her manufactured goods and agricultural products like foodstuff and spices. She had a flourishing trade also with the Laccadive and the Maldive islands, and almost all

the eastern countries of Asia,—China, Pegu, the Malay Peninsula and the Philippine islands.

Bengal had also a large share in the inter-provincial trade before Plassey, and the manufactures of Bengal were carried to the remotest parts of India.

In course of a few years after Plassey, the East India Company established its exclusive right of exporting Bengal piece-goods to the markets of Basra, Jidda and Mocha.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century Bengal was inhabited by two distinct communities, the Hindus and Muslims. The proportion between the two cannot be exactly ascertained, but the Muslims formed more than one-third of the total. The Muslims had been living in Bengal for six hundred years, but they maintained their separate entity. For the sake of historical truth, and in order to view the subsequent development of political ideas in a correct perspective, it is necessary to draw attention to the fact that even before the establishment of British rule, there was a distinct cleavage between the Hindus and Muslims in Bengal. This is one of those topics on which Indian politicians, during the struggle for freedom, sought to put a new interpretation based more on sentiment or wishful thinking than solid historical facts. It was held by an important section of them that the Hindus and Muslims did not form two separate communities, but there was a fusion between the two cultures in India to such an extent that we are justified in speaking of a composite Indian community and culture rather than regard it as either Hindu or Muslim. Few Muslims ever adhered to this view, and its negation forms the basis of Pakistan as a separate political unit. But some prominent Hindu leaders even proceeded to such a length that they would describe our present culture as only Indian, and resent the use of any such expression as Hindu culture, which is simply non-existent in their view. It is, however, necessary for our present

purpose to point out that, rightly or wrongly, the two communities were generally regarded as distinct units in Bengal by the people themselves from the beginning of the British rule down to the end of the nineteenth century. As this point is of great importance for forming a correct judgment on various aspects of our political evolution, it is necessary to deal with it at some length.

In a written memorandum on the 'judicial system of India' which Raja Rammohan Roy submitted before a Committee of the House of Commons, we find the following questions and answers :—

Q. What is your opinion of the judicial character and conduct of the Hindu and Mahammadan lawyers attached to the courts ?

Ans. Among the Muhhammadan lawyers, I have met with some honest men. The Hindu lawyers are in general not well spoken of and they do not enjoy much of the confidence of the public.

In other answers, also, he contrasts the Hindus with the Muslims, and elsewhere he writes ;— "I have observed with respect to distant cousins. sprung from the same family and living in the same district, when one branch of the family had been converted to Mussulmanism, that those of the Muhammadan branch living in a freer manner were distinguished by greater bodily activity and capacity for exertion, than those of the other branch which had adhered to the Hindu simple mode of life."[2]

The queries and the answers show that the Hindus and the Muslims were regarded both by the British and the Indians as two separate communities with distinct cultures and different physical, mental, and moral characteristics. This view was also echoed by other prominent leaders like Dwarakanath Tagore, whose opinion will be quoted later.

In the vernacular newspapers of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, we find the Muslims referred to as "*yavana jati*", and a clear distinction is made between them and the Hindus. In 1833 two students of the Hindu College were appointed teachers of the Murshidabad school. It is reported in a vernacular paper dated February 13, 1835, that one of these died shortly after his arrival, and the other, though highly qualified, was not liked by the Muslims simply because he was a Hindu. So he resigned in May, 1836.[3] According to the regulations of the Hindu College only Hindu students could be admitted there. In general we find among the regulations of the new schools that it was open to all communities, Christians, Hindus and Muslims. Indeed such communal distinction was tacitly accepted almost in every sphere of life. Even as late as 12th August, 1869, we find in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* a long article on the Muslims, which begins with the statement, that the population is divided into two classes, viz., Hindus and Muslims, and then traces the origin of the majority of Muslims to the conversion of low class Hindus.[4] Throughout the nineteenth century we find this sharp distinction between the Hindus and Muslim communities reflected in Bengali literature.

It has been urged by Dr. Tarachand and other writers that close contact between the Hindus and Muslims during the long period of six or seven centuries that they lived side by side resulted in such a trasformation of both that each lost its individual character and a new culture was formed by the fusion of the two, which was neither exclusively Hindu nor purely Muslim. It was indeed a Muslim-Hindu or Indian culture.[5] All this is not, however, borne out by the actual state of things in Bengal.

Bengali books written in the fifteenth century A. D. refer to humiliating treatment, persecution and oppression of the Hindus by the Muslim officials.[6] This was true even in the reign of Husain Shah, generally regarded as an enlightened ruler. Even then the Hindus 'daily became Muslim to gain the favour of their rulers'.[7] The fundamental and basic difference between the two communities has always been apparent even to a casual observer, and this is borne out by the writings of Europeans on Bengal or India. In those days religion and social ideas and institutions counted far more in men's lives than anything else, and in these two respects the two communities differed as poles asunder. The worship of images which formed the most cherished element in the religious beliefs of the Hindus was an anathema in the eyes of the Muslims, and the long tradition of ruthless desecration of temples and divine images by them for over a thousand years down to the time of Alivardi Khan of Bengal, formed a wide gulf between the two. The method of congregational prayer by the Muslims was a thing unknown to the Hindus, and the ceremonial worship of the Hindus to the accompaniment of music, both vocal and instrumental, was not only alien to the Muslims, but positively distasteful and irksome to some of them. The temples and mosques were built in purely Hindu and Muslim styles, and were not influenced by each other, even to the least degree. As regards social institutions, the caste-ridden Hindu society was an enigma to the Muslims, while the food of the latter, particularly beef and onion, was looked upon with aversion by the Hindus. Other customs like *Sati* and untouchability among the Hindus, and widow-marriage and marriage between first cousins among the Muslims, as well as those of lesser importance like the funeral ceremonies, dress, rules of etiquette etc., created permanent cleavage between the two. The literary and intellectual tradition of the communities ran on entirely different lines. They

were educated separately in different institutions, viz., *Tols* and *Madrassas.* The Muslims drew their inspiration from the *Quran* and Arabic and Persian literature, though a few read Hindu religious books and composed books in Bengali. A number of Hindus knew Persian and a few learnt Arabic; some Hindus distinguished themselves as Persian scholar and author ; nevertheless the Hindu mind was nurtured upon the Epics and the *Puranas.* It is a strange phenomenon that although the Muslims and Hindus lived together in Bengal for more than six hundred years, the general masses of either community knew so little of the other's traditions. The plain facts of history support the view of "an essential antithesis of Islam and Hinduism" rather than that of a composite Indian culture.

Eminent political leaders like Lajpat Rai have expressed the view that the Hindus and Muslims have coalesced into an Indian people much in the same way as the Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Danes and Normans formed the English people of today.[8] But they conveniently forget that within a century or two of the Norman conquest nobody in Britain could find out who belonged to any one of these groups. But the Muslims, who settled in India long before the Norman conquest, can easily be distinguished from the Hindus even today—a fact more than once demonstrated in recent communal riots.

The Hindus believed that the majority of the Muslims in Bengal were converts from the lowest strata of Hindu society.[9] This is also recorded in the Census Report of 1872. How far this belief is historically correct need not be discussed in the present context, But the belief was there, and there is no doubt that the upper class Hindus treated the Muslim masses like the low castes of their own society. Even in the closing years of the nineteenth century, it was a common experience in the villages in Bengal that, except in a few cases,

even respectable Muslim gentlemen who visited a caste Hindu's home had to sit in the verandah and were not admitted inside a room. As far back as 1000 A. D. the great Alberuni clearly perceived the great gulf that normally separated the Hindus from the Muslims. "The Hindus", he observed, "entirely differ from us in every respect : they totally differ from us in religion, as we believe in nothing in which they believe. and *vice versa*. They call them (Muslims) *mleccha*, i.e. impure, and forbid having any connection with them, be it by intermarriage or any other kind of relationship, or by sitting. eating and drinking with them, because thereby, they think, they would be polluted. They consider as impure anything which touches the fire and the water of a foreigner."[10] These words were almost equally true in 1800.

Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that in spite of occasional communal riots, there was, generally speaking no ill feeling between the two communities at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and each tacitly recognized the position evolved in course of centuries as normal and usual. There was, of course, no social intercourse between the two, as we understand the term today, for a Hindu would not take food or even a glass of water touched by a Muslim. This did not, however, prevent a Hindu from being a guest at the house of a Muslim or *vice versa*. Each would scrupulously respect the feelings and sentiments of the other, and provide for the food agreeable to him. Many respectable Muslims maintained permanent kitchens under Hindu management for their Hindu guests, and Hindus would either do the same or arrange with a Muslim neighbour for the food of their Muslim guests. It is also true that long residence as close neighbours exercised some influence on both. Many local beliefs and superstitions, reverence for

holy saints and festivals of the other community, many folk songs and popular pastimes, and even some social etiquette and customs were in common between the two communities. But these were minor points and did not touch the essentials of life. In all vital matters affecting the culture, the Hindus and Muslims lived in two water-tight compartments as it were.

As regards intellectual development, it would be hardly any exaggeration to say that higher education in Bengal, both among the Hindus and the Muslims, followed a stereotyped course during the half millennium ending in 1800 A. D. Higher education was confined to Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian in *Tols*, *Chatuspathis*, *Maktabs* and *Madrassas*. In addition to religious texts the curriculum consisted of literature, with its ancillary studies, law and logic. These were valuable for imparting knowledge of religion and customs on orthodox principles such as were in vogue hundreds of years ago, but were hardly of any value either in practical life or for widening the bounds of knowledge. While the world outside had made rapid progress in different branches of secular learning during the preceding two hundred years, India practically stood still where it was six hundred years ago.

In addition to the traditional higher learning through Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian, elementary education was provided in a number of primary schools through the medium of Bengali to both Hindus and Muslims in Bengal, Urdu being unknown for this purpose. But the two communities had separate institutions. The percentage of pupils was overwhelmingly Hindu. Whereas the Hindu population was to the Mussalman in the proportion of rather more than 2 to 1, the Hindu pupils enjoying the benefit of elementary indigenous education were to the Mussalman pupils in the proportion of abour 18 to 1.

The aggregate average number of the pupils for all the districts was no more than $7\frac{3}{4}$ per cent., and the aggregate average of adult population who could read or write was no more than $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. There were few structures for these schools, and they were usually held in private houses and not unoften under the shade of trees. The average pay of a school teacher was about Rs. 2/8/- per month, about half of a menial's wage in Calcutta at that time.

As regards female education, it was practically unknown, and there was no public institution for this purpose. There was a superstitious idea that a girl, taught to read and write, would soon after marriage become a widow. In the whole district of Murshidabad, Adam only found 6 women who could read or write, or who could merely decipher writing or sign their names. "In all the other localities of which a census was taken, no adult females were found to possess even the lowest grade of instruction," a few probable exceptions being the daughters of *Zamindars* or some religious sects.[11]

So far as literature was concerned, the prospect was not very hopeful. Bengali poetry had a long tradition behind it, but there was no poet after Bharatchandra, who flourished about the middle of the eighteenth century A. D. However strange it may sound, there was no prose literature in Bengali at the beginning of the nineteenth century A. D. Prose was never used except in writing letters or legal deeds, but the style and vocabulary were more Persian than Bengali.

The intellectual stagnation indicated by the above facts explains to a large extent the moral torpor and social abuses that characterized the Hindus. The Hindu society had not materially changed from what it was in the thirteenth century A.D. But its rank was thinned by the gradual conversion of Hindus to Islam, partly on

account of its over-sensitiveness to ideas of purity and severe restrictions imposed by caste rules, and partly on account of the greater material advantages enjoyed by a Hindu convert to Muslim faith, as stated above.

How little the Hindu religion and society were influenced by Islam during 600 years is indicated by their imperviousness to the fundamental characteristics of their Muslim counterparts. A deep-rooted belief in a number of gods and goddesses and worship of their image ; the caste-system, restrictions of food and marriage, strict prohibition of marriage of widows, horror of beef-eating etc. show how Islam failed to touch even the fringe of Hindu religion and society. In particular, it is strange that the wonderful social democracy of the Muslims made absolutely no impression on the Hindus, and far from removing the barriers artificially planted between man and man, rather made them stronger and stronger.

There was a general deterioration in the Hindu society. Long subjection to foreign rule, lack of contact with the progressive forces of the world, and a stereotyped form of knowledge, based upon blind faith impervious to reason,—all these told upon the mental and moral outlook of men and society. Nothing so forcibly illustrates the degrading character of the age as its callousness to women. It was seriously debated in Bengali periodicals throughout the first half of the nineteenth century whether the Hindu scriptures are in favour of, or against, female education. The case of *Sati* or burning of a widow along with the body of her dead husband is well-known. In Calcutta and its neighbourhood alone there were 253, 289 and 441 cases of *Sati*, respectively in 1815, 1816 and 1817. And yet when the practice was forbidden by law, a largely signed petition was presented to the Government against it. The signatories numbered 1146, including 120 Pandits and many promi-

nent leaders of Hindu society in Bengal. A number of letters also appeared in the newspapers in support of the abominable practice.

Another social evil was the marriage of *Kulin* Brahmanas. Owing to old conventions a few Brahmana families in Bengal were regarded as *Kulins*, i.e. superior in respect of social prestige, and their boys alone came to be regarded as suitable husbands for girls of certain families. The result was that each of them married a large number of wives, sometimes as many as fifty, sixty or even more. These wives lived in their fathers' houses and many of them scarcely saw their husbands after marriage. The evil was heightened by the fact that many girls, according to social usage, were married to an old man, just to remove their maidenhood, which was considered a disgrace. It is hardly necessary to point out the great moral evils resulting from this practice, but it was tolerated, in spite of protests, and did not disappear till quite late in the century.

Callousness to human sufferings, arising out of blind adherence to old practices, seems to have been the order of the day. The number of cruel practices associated with the *Charak Puja* furnish another illustration. Men were tied to a rope attached to a wheel and rapidly whirled round, while in some cases, iron pikes or arrows were inserted into the back, legs or other parts of their bodies. Sometimes the rope snapped and the body was thrown at a distance of 25 or 30 yards, reduced to a shapeless mass. In all cases the men were all but dead when brought down from the wheel.

Many of these social evils were crying for relief, but the Hindus were absolutely callous to them. The *Sati* or burning of the widows along with their dead husbands, throwing children into the Ganges, horrible tortures self-

inflicted during the *Charak Puja,* and the pathetic tales of woes and sufferings of the *Kulin* girls left the society unmoved. It seems as if there was a paralysis of moral sensibilities and utter lack of humane feelings among the Hindus, or at least quite a large section of them. This was again due to the fact that faith and superstitious reverence for *sastras,* or what came to be regarded as such, took the place of reason and free judgment, and men had lost all sense of moral values apart from injunctions of religious creed. Consequently, religious ceremonies had degenerated into popular festivals, sometimes of an immoral type. The *Durga Puja* was the most popular festival then as it is now. It was an institution peculiar to Bengal and of no long antiquity. But it appears from the contemporary periodicals that in aristocratic families of Calcutta it was mostly an occasion for displaying wealth, pomp, pageantry, and grandeur.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the Muslim culture and civilization also had become a spent force all over India, but owing to the absence of a local Muslim aristocracy, Bengal was perhaps much worse than most other Provinces. The local Hindus and Muslims had ceased to exercise any political power during the Mughal period, when Bengal was contemptuously described as "a hell well stocked with bread". The result is thus described by Sir Jadunath Sarkar:

"When Clive struck at the Nawab, Mughal civilization had become a spent bullet. Its potency for good, its very life was gone. The country's administration had become hopelessly dishonest and inefficient, and the mass of the people had been reduced to the deepest poverty, ignorance and moral degradation by small, selfish, proud, and unworthy ruling class. Imbecile lechers filled the throne; the family of Alivardy did not produce a single son worthy to be called a man, and the women were even

worse than the men. Sadists like Siraj and Miran made even their highest subjects live in constant terror. The army was rotten and honey-combed with treason. The purity of domestic life was threatened by the debauchery fashionable in the Court and the aristocracy and the sensual literature that grew up under such patrons. Religion had become the handmaid of vice and folly."[12]

In order to complete the picture of the condition of the people at the beginning of the British rule, it is necessary to give an idea of the anarchy and violence that prevailed in many parts of India on the eve of British rule. So far as Bengal is concerned, Sir Jadunath Sarkar describes the state of things during the reign of Alivardi Khan as follows :

"All over the country from which the Nawab's authority had disappeared, the Maratha hordes committed wanton destruction and unspeakable outrage on the roads and villages.

"Utter terror raged throughout Bengal in consequence of their atrocities..............An eye-witness, the Bengali poet Gangaram, thus describes the sufferings of the people : 'The *Bargis* began to loot the villages. Every class of men took to flight with their property,......... when suddenly the *Bargis* came up and encircled them in the plain. They snatched away gold and silver, rejecting everything else. Of some people they cut off the hand, of some the nose and ears; some they killed outright. They dragged away the beautiful women, tying their fingers to their necks with ropes. When one *Bargi* had done wiih a woman, another seized her; the women shrieked in the agony of ravishment. The *Bargis*, after thus committing all sinful acts, set these women free. Then, after looting in the open the *Bargis* entered the villages. They set fire to the houses, large and small, temples and dwelling places. After burning the villages they roamed about on all sides,

plundering. Some victims they tied up with their arms twisted behind them. Some they flung down and kicked with their shoes. They constantly shouted, 'Give us Rupees, give us Rupees,give us Rupees'. Where they got no Rupee, they filled their victims' nostrils with water or drowned them in tanks. Some were put to death by suffocation."[13]

These allegations may appear to be too horrible to be true. But they are corroborated by other writers, both Hindu and Muslim, as well as the letters from the French factory at Chandarnagar and the English settlement at Calcutta.[14] Many years elapsed before the British attempt to eradicate the state of lawlessness and the scourge of banditry proved successful. Thus O' Malley writes :

"In 1772 bodies of banditti were reported to be plundering the north of Bengal to the number of 50,000 ; even as as late as 1810 Lord Minto referred to a monstrous and disorganized state of society due to the great bodies of armed banditti who robbed or burned villages, and murdered or tortured their inhabitants. Scarcely were law and order established in one tract when the process had to be repeated in another. The territories in Upper India which were annexed in 1803 were swarming with disbanded soldiers and robbers, and authority was frequently set at defiance. The villages round Delhi, for example, were 'a sodality of criminals', who quartered the capital out in shares and had a monopoly of the plunder in their allotted portions. One village was subdued only after battle in which a force of five battalions, supported by cavalry and artillery, was employed. In Central India the hordes of free-booters kuown as Pindaris, a floating population of mercenaries and desperadoes, scoured the country, aad it was not till after 1819 that the ploughman began again to turn up a soil which, as the Marquess of Hastings said, had for many seasons never been stirred except by the hoofs of pre-

datory cavalry. In 1824 there were still 10,000 men under arms in Rohilkhand, where the numerous chiefs, angry at being without employment and without any hope of rising in the State or army, continually broke out into acts of lawless violence. According to Bishop Heber, there were a general laxity of law and an almost universal prevalence of intestine feuds and habits of plunder in all the independent states and in some of the districts partially subject to British control."[15] O'Malley further observes: "In the Northern Circars, which were acquired in 1766, the whole system of government had been disorganized to such an extent that not only the forms but even the remembrance of civil authority seemed to be lost. Farther south, in the territories which were ceded in 1800, Sir Thomas Munro declared in the following year that a decade of Mughal government (in Cuddapah) had been almost as destructive as so many years of War. 'This last year', he wrote, 'a mutinous unpaid army was turned loose in the sowing season to collect their pay from the villages. They drove off and sold cattle, extorted money by torture from every man who fell into their hands, and plundered the houses and shops of those who fled.' The visitations of the Nizam's army were not the only burden of the people. There were eighty local chieftains who carried on destructive feuds, while their little armies, aggregating about 30,000, subsisted by rapine. These may be regarded as licensed looters, There were also unauthorized plunderers in the form of bands of robbers who wandered through the country, murdering and robbing like the banditti of Bengal. There appear to have been no governmental courts of justice, the villagers and heads of castes being left to settle disputes among themselves: even in Tanjore, with its comparative prosperity, a court was established by the Raja only at the close of the eighteenth century at the suggestion

of his guardian, the Danish missionary Schwartz."[16]

- Similar scenes of rapine and devastation could be witnessed in almost every part of India. Mr. O. 'Malley has collected a number of extracts from contemporary authors which throw a lurid light on the political and social condition of India of those days. In Northern India, the combined result of war, famine. and oppression was the devastation of many areas and the condition was renhered much worse by the infrequent plundering raids of the Marathas and other organized bands and robbers. The following picture of Western India during the later stage of Maratha rule is corroborated by the delailed accounts of Maratha raids in Bengal in contemporary writings, to which reference has been made above.

"The towns were ransacked by the armies which marched and counter-marched across the country. Houses were stripped of movable property, and their owners made to give up their last mite and tortured if they were suspected of having hidden hoards. A Maratha army was followed by swarms of licensed plunderers, who shared their spoils with the commanders of the corps to which they were attached. Armed with swords and spears, hatches and crowbars, they entered places which had already been visited by the troops and deserted by their inhabitants, stripped the houses of their locks, hinges, ironwork and timber, dug up the floors and demolished the walls in search of any possible cache, and finally set fire to what they could not carry away. These were the Pindaris, who, in the last days of Maratha rule, when organized in great hordes, were the scourge of the country."[17]

A strong contrast to all these was offered by the tiny settlements of the British traders in India. The Court of Directors reminded their servants in India that security of life and property and due administration of justice "must of necessity people your territories, considering the

country all about you is under a despotic government."[18] The East India Company made this a fundamental maxim of their administration and no wonder that the English settlement in Calcutta "presented a very favourable contrast to the government of the surrounding districts, a contrast which was not forgotten in 1757."[19]

These facts should be borne in mind in order to understand why the people in general, exclusive of those whose material interests were directly affected, were not opposed to the British rule and even welcomed it as heralding the dawn of peace, prosperity and security. The Hindus had an additional reason for doing so, as after six hundred years or more they got the right of worshipping their gods as they liked, and their divine images and temples were free from destruction and defilement,

CHAPTER III.

EARLY REACTIONS AGAINST BRITISH RULE

A. BENGAL

I. INDIFFERENCE OF THE PEOPLE

Although the British became virtual rulers of Bengal after the battle of Palasi (Plassey) in 1757, it took some years for the people of Bengal to realize the change. For, to a large extent, the old framework of administration, centring round the titular Nawab of Murshidabad, continued for some years, and the legal transference of power from his hands to the British Governor in Calcutta was effected very slowly and by degrees. The establishment of the new Council and Supreme Court in Calcutta, and the appointment of Warren Hastings as Governor-General in 1774, must bave convinced the people that there was a real change in political authority. During the twenty-five years that followed, the establishment of British supremacy was not only an accomplished fact, but was generally recognized to be so by the people of Bengal.

It would be interesting to trace the first reaction of the people to this great change. The contemporary literature is, however, too scanty to enable us to form a correct idea of the situation. But there is nothing to show that the masses took any serious view of the change in political authority. The economic effects of the British rule were, however, disastrous to the people, and they suffered so terribly that there were some open outbreaks, as will be described later; but there is no indication that there was any general outcry against the alien rulers as such, far

less any idea of organized resistance against them. Some of the circumstances which explain such passive attitude have been noted in the preceding chapter.

One of the reasons for the comparative indifference of the people to the establishment of foreign rule in Bengal seems to be that similar political changes took place in recent times. Alivardi Khan, whose grandson and successor, Siraj-ud-daulah, was defeated by the British at Palasi in 1757, had himself usurped the throne by a similar *coup d'etat* only seventeen years before, and Mir Jafar, who owed his throne to the English, possessed as good a claim to the allegiance of the people as the rulers he succeeded. Today, we are accustomed to look upon the victory of the British at Palasi as an epoch-making event in Indian history, and regard it as the foundation of British rule in India. The people of Bengal in those days had neither reason nor justification to view it in this light. They looked upon the accession of Mir Jafar as one usurper succeeding another, and it was beyond the limit of reasonable apprehension to see in this event the beginning of British rule in Bengal, far less in India. When gradually, towards the end of the 18th century, the people realized that the British had ousted the Muslim Nawab from all power and authority, the reaction of the Muslims and Hindus was different.

The exact attitude of the Muslims towards the British rule in Bengal is difficult to judge. That there was a sullen resentment against the imposition of British rule in Bengal and Bihar appears clearly from the later Wahabi movement and its offshoots which had a strong centre in this region. But there was no active resistance at the moment. This seems to be due to some of the general causes mentioned above, such as the change of ruling dynasties in recent times. But the chief reason seems to be that the Muslims formed a minority in

Bengal and were generally less advanced in all spheres of life. More important still, they did not possess an aristocratic class which supplied the natural leaders to the people in those days. On account of the prolonged resistance of the local chiefs to the Mughal emperors, these could effectively establish their suzerainty in Bengal only after a great deal of difficulty extending over a long period. Hence, to secure their hold, they followed the policy of appointing governors and high officials in the Province from among Muslims of Upper India who retired to their own home after the end of their term of service. It was Murshid Kuli Khan (died A. D. 1725) who, for the first time, established a ruling family in Bengal, and appointed local men as high officials. But the usurper Alivardi Khan, who wrested the throne from his family in 1740, made it a policy to appoint Hindus in high offices by way of a check against the Muslim adherents of the late ruling family. Thus there was no Muslim aristocracy, either of birth or service, of long standing, which could organize an open resistance against the British. There is, however, no doubt that the Muslims, who suffered seriously from the loss of their power and prestige, were in a truculent mood and kept themselves aloof from the English as far as possible.

Far different was the attitude of the Hindus, who welcomed the British as deliverers from the yoke of Muslim tyrants. As this is a vital question, not only in the history of Bengal but of India as a whole, and there is considerable misconception on the subject due to deliberate perversion of facts owing to political exigencies of the twentieth century, it is necessary to study the matter in some detail.

In the first place, it should be remembered that the Bengalis, like other peoples of India, did not look beyond the horizon of their own Province. In those days there

was no conception of India as a country. There were Bengalis, Hindusthanis, Sikhs, Rajputs and Marathas, but no Indian. Bishop Heber, describing his tour in Upper India in 1824, says that the people of Hindusthan, i.e. Upper India, regarded the Bengalis as much a foreigner as the English. The Bengalis reciprocated the feeling. To the Bengalis the Marathas were not only as much foreigners as the English, but they were hated foreigners which the English were not. For the outrages committed by the Marathas upon the Bengalis within almost living memory were such as no people of one part of India were known to have done to people of another part, and Bengal's hatred against the Marathas found expression even in lullaby. When there was no conception of India, or what was worse, the bond between one part and another was one of hatred rather than of love or friendship, there could be no question of regarding the English as foreigners in the sense in which we understand the term. This explains why, when the British from their base in Bengal fought against the Marathas, Gurkhas, and other powers, the Bengalis of wealth and respectability offred up regular prayers to God for the success of the British arms and voluntarily came forward to help the British with a large proportion of their property.[1]

The question may also be looked at from another standpoint. We regard it to be the duty of a man to fight for his country against a foreigner. But what is a man's country? If we analyze the notion we find that it presupposes the man to have been born and bred in a community which may be regarded as a great family. But if the community has not been at all of the nature of a family, but has been composed of two or three races hating each other, and one of which has denied the others elementary rights of a citizen, then it is not the fault of that section of the natives that they

have no patriotism. It is one thing to receive foreign yoke for the first time and quite a different thing to exchange one foreign yoke for another.[2]

This seems to have been exactly the position of the Hindus of Bengal. I know it goes against the current view, and eminent political leaders of our country in the 20th century have drawn a rosy picture of the brotherhood and fellow-feelings of the Hindus and Musalmans. Some have even gone so far as to assert that the Hindus were not a subject nation at all under the Muslims, and had not lost their freedom till the British conquest. Eminent leaders, including Lajpat Rai[3] and Subhas Chandra Bose[4] of revered memory, wrote or spoke in this strain. But the historian is concerned not with what the politicians said a century later, but what was thought of the Muslim rule by the Hindu leaders of Bengal from the middle of the 18th to the end of the 19th century, when the political leaders of India started the slogan of Hindu-Muslim *bhai bhai* (brothers) and sought to rewrite the history of their country to suit their own political views.

The state of things on the eve of the British conquest of Bengal has been thus summed up by S. C. Hill in his Introduction to the collection of Records relating to Bengal in 1756-7 in three volumes. After referring to the fact that the Bengali Hindus had, as a subject race, been apathetic to all affairs of State, he notes a change and describes it in the following words :

"But it would seem as if there was at this time a revival of Hindu feeling coincident with the gradual weakening of the Muhammadan power throughout India as a whole and more particularly in Bengal. Thus, we find that the partisans of the British were almost all Hindus or protégés of the Hindus, and M. Law tells us that the Hindu Zamindars of Bihar would have replaced Siraj-ud-daula by a Hindu ruler if it had not been for the influence of the Seths. The

disaffection of the Hindu Rajas to the Muhammadan Government had been noticed by other observers — *e. g.*, Colonel Scot wrote to his friend Mr. Noble in 1754 that 'the *Jentue* (Hindu) rajahs and inhabitants were much disaffected to the Moor (Muhammadan) Government, and secretly wished for a change and opportunity of throwing off their tyrannical yoke.'

"The fact that the commerce and manufactures of the country were almost entirely in the hands of the Hindus naturally brought them into close connection with the European merchants, who had settled in the country for the purpose of trade, and so produced a kind of tacit alliance based mainly upon their material interests." [5]

Dr. K. K. Datta observes : "While there was mutual assimilation of customs and thought between the two communities to a certain extent, the relations between the prominent members of the two communities living in the court circles were sometimes very bitter.........So they (Hindu aristocrats) allied themselves with the English to overthrow the upstart Nawabs of Bengal.........Had Mir Kasim been ably supported by Shitab Roy and his party, the history of Bengal might perhaps have been different. The cause of the English was greatly furthered by the assistance of Shitab Roy, his son Kalyan Singh, and others.........Kalyan Singh has himself related (*Khulasat-ut-Twraikh*) in plain words his activities, those of his father and others in favour of the English."[5a] An instance of the political alliance on communal lines is furnished by the instructions attached to an important letter written by Maharaja Nabakrishna to Governor Drake, to the effect that it should be read by a Hindu and not a Muhammadan. It was this Nabakrishna who supplied provisions to those Englishmen who fled from Calcutta after its capture by Siraj-ud-daula and took refuge at Falta.[5b]

A strong feeling of antipathy towards the Muslim rule is expressed by the great Bengali poet Bharatchandra in his

magnum opus the *Annadamangal*, composed in 1752 A. D., i, e., only five years before the Battle of Palasi (Plassey). He denounces the iconoclastic activities of Nawab Alivardi Khan and refers to the Maratha ruler as the chosen instrument of god Siva for punishing the wicked Yavana.

The traditional Hindu aversion to Muslim rule was voiced by Raja Rammohan Roy, who was the greatest personality in Bengal at the beginning of the 19th century and is justly regarded as the representative of the most advanced political thinking of the time. He was a sound scholar in Arabic and Persian and adopted Muslim dress and food ; so nobody can accuse him of anti-Muslim bias. His views on the point at issue are scattered in his writings, but the following extract from his petition to the King in Council in 1823 is enough to indicate them.

"The greater part of Hindustan having been for several centuries subject to Muhammadan Rule, the civil and religious rights of its original inhabitants were constantly trampled upon, and from the habitual oppression of the conquerors, a great body of their subjects in the southern Peninsula (Dukhin), afterwards called Marhattahs, and another body in the western parts now styled Sikhs, were at last driven to revolt ; and when the Mussalman power became feeble, they ultimately succeeded in establishing their independence ; but the Natives of Bengal wanting vigor of body, and adverse to active exertion, remained during the whole period of the Muhammadan conquest, faithful to the existing Government, although their property was often plundered, their religion insulted, and their blood wantonly shed. Divine Providence at last, in its abundant mercy, stirred up the English nation to break the yoke of those tyrants, and to receive the oppressed Natives of Bengal under its protection."[6] He concludes his final Appeal to the Christian Public with the following words :

"I now conclude my Essay by offering up thanks to

the Supreme Disposer of the events of this universe, for having unexpectedly delivered this country from the long-continued tyranny of its former Rulers, and placed it under the government of the English; — a nation who not only were blessed with the enjoyment of civil and political liberty, but also interest themselves in promoting liberty and social happiness, as well as free inquiry into literary and religious subjects, among those nations to which their influence extends".[7]

But Rammohan Roy was not alone in holding these views ; some of his younger contemporaries proceeded even further, and almost all the evils from which the country was suffering were attributed to the Muslim rule. Thus Dwaraka Nath Tagore, by no means an orthodox Hindu, writes in a letter to the *Englishman*, dated 6 December, 1838 : "The present characteristic failings of natives are want of truth, a want of integrity, a want of independence. These were not the characteristics of former days, before the religion was corrupted and education had disappeared. It is to the Mahomedan conquest that these evils are owing, and they are the invariable results of the loss of liberty and national degradation. The Mahomedans introduced in this country all the vices of an ignorant, intolerant and licentious soldiery. The utter destruction of learning and science was an invariable part of their system, and the conquered, no longer able to protect their lives by arms and independence, fell into opposite extremes of abject submission, deceit and fraud. Such has been the condition of the Natives of Hindustan for centuries." [8]

A vernacular periodical in 1830 contrasts the period of the Hindu Rajas with that of the Muslims and the British. This view persisted throughout the nineteenth century among the Hindus. It is reflected in periodicals and literary works. The great Bengali writer Bankim Chandra Chatterji, who died in A. D. 1894, gave forceful expression to it.

There is hardly any doubt that this general popular feeling in the nineteenth century represents the historical truth. The five hundred years of suffering under foreign rule sapped the vitality of the Hindus in Bengal, and explain their indifference to the new foreign conquest. Lord Clive, after the battle of Palasi, made a triumphal entry into the city of Murshidabad at the head of 200 Europeans and 500 sepoys. He observed 'that the inhabitants, who were spectators on that occasion, must have amounted to some hundred thousands ; and if they had an inclination to have destroyed the Europeans they might have done it with sticks and stones'.[9] One, imbued with modern ideas, may feel surprised that the inhabitants of Murshidabad showed no such inclination. But it is not difficult to explain, and even excuse, their attitude in the light of what has been said above. In modern times the people conceive the State to be their own with recognized rights and duties, and hence they are ready to defend it with the last drop of their blood. In the Medieval Age the same spirit was engendered by loyalty to the ruling family or love for the motherland in which they were free men. But we cannot expect the same thing in a State, which possessed no ruling family of long standing and was recently seized by a usurper by means of violence, which the majority of the people did not look upon as their own, and in which they possessed no right whatsoever. As Seeley has observed, where the Government ceases to rest upon right, the State loses its right to appeal to patriotism.

Whatever might have been the first reaction of the Hindus to the British rule, there is no doubt that they not only reconciled themselves to it, but grew friendly or even devoted to the new rulers.

Here, again, we may quote the views of Raja Rammohan Roy. In his autobiographical sketch, written in the form of a letter to a friend, the Raja says that at the age of

sixteen (i, e. A. D. 1787)he cherished "a feeling of great aversion to the establishment of the British power in India." But, he continues, "when I had reached the age of twenty... I first saw and began to associate with the Europeans, and soon after made myself tolerably acquainted with their laws and form of government. Finding them generally more intelligent, more steady and moderate in their conduct, I gave up my prejudice against them and became inclined in their favour, feeling persuaded that their rule, though a foreign yoke, would lead more speedily and surely to the amelioration of the native inhabitants."[10] It must be noted in this connection that the change in Rammohan's feeling cannot be attributed to English education. For he only began to learn English at the age of 22 (A.D. 1793) and, as John Digby, under whom he served, tells us, even in A.D. 1805 he (Rommohan) "could merely speak it well enough to be understood upon the most common topics of discourse, but could not write it with any degree of correctness."[11]

There is no doubt that the liberal character of British administration, specially its judicial system, made a very favourable impression upon the Hindus who contrasted it with the decadent system of Muslim rule in the eighteenth century, so strongly marked by inefficiency, corruption and exactions to an almost incredible extent. This is specially true of the upper classes and intelligentsia among the Hindus. Anyone, who even cursorily glances through the journals or public addresses of the prominent Hindu leaders in Bengal during the first half of the nineteenth century will be surprised at the violent denunciation of the Muslim rule, and the enthusiastic, almost rapturous, applause of the British administration which supplanted it. As noted above, almost all the evils from which the country was suffering were attributed to the Muslim rule by Dwaraka Nath Tagore who expressed "his conviction that the happiness of India is best secured by her connection with England."

Prasanna Kumar Tagore openly declared that he would perfer English government to any other, even to a Hindu government.[12] No wonder that the citizens of Calcutta offered prayers for the victory of the British during the Third Maratha War and the Nepal War.

But though the masses in Bengal were indifferent to British conquest, and the Hindu intelligentsia welcomed it as providential deliverance from tyrannical Muslim rule, there was hostile reaction to it in some quarters, sometimes leading to active opposition. Though mainly inspired by considerations of self-interest, the hostile reaction to the British rule during the second half of the eighteenth century deserves a brief notice, in order, at least, to combat the view, generally held, that the establishment of British authority in Bengal was not challenged, save for a brief period in the reign of Mir Kasim. Besides, strange as it may appear, this active opposition not only strengthened the position of the English and consolidated their rule in Bengal, but gave it an All-India character, and paved the way for their ultimate domination over India.

II. HOSTILE REACTION

The opposition to the new political set-up can be distinctly traced to three different sources, viz., (1) The external powers, such as the Shahzada, afterwards the Emperor Shah Alam, the Nawab of Avadh, and the Marathas ; (2) the two Nawabs of Bengal, Mir Jafar and Mir Kasim ; and (3) the *Zamindars*,high officials and the army.

A. INVASIONS OF SHAH ALAM [13]

Shortly after the battle of Palasi (Plassey), more precisely, towards the close of 1758, Bihar was invaded by Shah Alam or Ali Gauhar, the heir apparent to the throne of Delhi. Apart from his general claims in this capacity, he had been nominated by his father, the Emperor Alamgir II, the Subahdar of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. He had

therefore every legal right to the possession of Bengal by ousting Mir Jafar.

But before proceeding further, it is necessary to say a few words about the Emperor of Delhi in order to explain the true position of the Shahzada at this time. After the disintegration of the Mughal Empire, which really set in during the reign of Muhammad Shah (1719-48), his son and successor, Ahmad Shah, was unable to check the forces of disruption, and the Empire was soon reduced to a small district round Delhi. At last he was deposed and blinded in 1754 A. D. by his Wazir, Gazi-ud-din Imad-ul-Mulk, a grandson of Nizam-ul-Mulk, the founder of the famous ruling family of Hyderabad in the Deccan. The Wazir now placed on the throne a son of Emperor Jahandar Shah, named Aziz-ud-din, who had so long been in confinement. He assumed the title Alamgir II, but "found himself as much a prisoner upon the throne as he was formerly in his confinement."

The repeated invasions of the Afghan ruler Ahmad Shah Abdali had forced the Emperor Ahmad Shah to cede to him the whole of the Panjab to the west of Sirhind. But taking advantage of some disorders in the Province, Imad-ul-Mulk invaded it and brought it under his authority. This provoked another invasion of Abdali who arrived before Delhi on January 23, 1757. The Wazir surrendered to the invader, and the Emperor formally ceded to him the Panjab, Kashmir, Sindh and Sirhind. Abdali went back, leaving Najib-ud-daulah, the Ruhela Chief, as his supreme agent at Delhi.

The Marathas, who were now aspiring to establish their authority all over India, attacked Delhi in August, 1757. They compelled Najib-ud-daulah to surrender and return to his own country, and reinstated Imad-ul-Mulk as the Wazir.

The Marathas then conquered the Panjab which pro-

voked Abdali to a fresh invasion of India in October, 1759. Najib-ud-daulah joined Abdali and secured for him the alliance of Shuja-ud-daulah of Oudh.

1. First Expedition(1759, March-July) of Shah Alam.

In the meantime the malignant and unscrupulous character of the Wazir had forced the Crown-prince Shah Alam to leave Delhi and seek shelter with Najib-ud-daulah. The political revolution in Bengal, the unpopularity of Mir Jafar, and the disorders of his administration, raised high hopes in the minds of neighbouring chiefs that they could easily turn the sitution to their advantage. Muhammad Kuli Khan, the Subahdar of Allahabad, and Shuja-ud-daulah, the Nawab of Avadh, aided by two powerful *Zamindars*, the Rajas Sundar Singh and Balwant Singh, formed the design of invading Bihar, with the fugitive Crown-prince at their head. The French general M. Law also hastened to join the expedition. The Prince reached Phulwari, 7 miles west of Patna, on March 7, 1759.

In the face of this great danger Mir Jafar,whose troops were in a state of mutiny for want of pay, turned to Clive for assistance. Shah Alam also asked for the help of Clive.[14] But Clive faithfully supported the cause of Mir Jafar and advanced to the relief of Patna which was besieged by the confederate forces. They were about thirty thousand strong and had already possessed some of the bastions. Ram Narayan, the Governor of Bihar, held the fort till the arrival of Clive at the head of about four hundred and fifty Europeans and two thousand five hundred Sepoys. Clive drove back the enemy ; Shah Alam abruptly broke up the camp and retreated with great precipitation. The main cause of Shah Alam's discomfiture was the treachery of the Nawab of Avadh. Advancing on the pretence of joining the Prince, he seized the fort of Allahabad, and Muhammad Kuli Khan, whose forces were the main, if not entire, supp-

ort of the Prince, marched immediately to recover his dominions. Law, who joined with his forces at four miles' distance from Patna, urged Muhammad Kuli to return to Patna. But he refused and continued his march, only to be imprisoned and put to death by the Nawab of Avadh.

In the meantime the powerful Wazir at Delhi forced the Emperor to appoint another Prince as Subahdar of Bihar, and wrote to Mir Jafar in the name of the Emperor to seize and secure the person of his rebellious son. That unhappy Prince now sought the protection of the English and wrote a letter to Clive, requesting a sum of money for his subsistence and offering in return to withdraw from the Province. Clive sent about a thousand pounds, and as soon as Shah Alam left, the *Zamindars* who had joined him hastened to make peace.

Thus ended the ill-concerted movement to change the political condition of Bengal brought about by the revolution of 1757. It was a blessing in disguise for both Mir Jafar and Clive. For the Emperor, or rather the Wazir acting in his name, deprived Shah Alam of the title of Subahdar of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, and transferred it to his younger brother, Mir Jafar being named as his lieutenant with a perfect understanding that he would retain the substantial power which he already possessed. At the request of Mir Jafar Clive was made an *Omrah* of the Empire, and Mir Jafar granted him a *Jagir* to maintain this newly won dignity.

While Miran, the son of Mir Jafar, who commanded his troops in this expedition, was in Patna, he had treated with injustice some officers of high rank and influence. As soon as he left, these and some neighbouring *Zamindars* sought to organize a fresh expedition against Bihar under Shah Alam. Khadim Husain, the Nawab of Purnea, whom Miran attempted to murder, had declared open rebellion and was expected to join the Prince.

2. Second Expedition (1759-60).

Shah Alam accordingly set out from Rewa towards the end of October, and arrived at Gothauli (5 miles north of Sone East Bank Railway Station) on December 20, 1759.

Things of great moment happened in Delhi about this time. Reference has been made above to the fifth invasion of India by Ahmad Shah Abdali in October, 1759. Excited by this imminent danger the Wazir, "in a fit of exasperation or despair", murdered the Emperor. The news reached Shah Alam at Gothauli. He immediately assumed the title of Emperor, under the name of Shah Alam II, bestowed the office of Wazir upon Shuja-ud-daulah, the Nawab of Avadh, and confirmed Najib-ud-daulah in the office of Amir-ul-Umra. Kamghar Khan, *Zamindar* of Nurhat (in the Gaya District), joined him with five thousand men.

While the new Emperor wasted valuable time in holding grand ceremonies and coronation rejoicings, Ram Narayan completed his defence and a British force under Caillaud, with the army of Miran, started for Patna. Ram Narayan attacked the Imperial army on February 9, 1760, before the arrival of these troops ; but three of his divisional commanders treacherously went over to the enemy and Ram Narayan retreated to his fort, defeated and wounded. The Emperor came close to Patna on February 17, but did not venture to attack it, and was defeated by Caillaud on February 22. The refusal of Miran to lend his cavalry enabled the Emperor to retire safely to Bihar city (28 February).

Here, under Kamghar Khan's able guidance, he formed the bold plan of marching upon Murshidabad with a light cavalry through unknown hills and jungles of south-eastern Bihar. He advanced to Bishnupur where a Maratha force under Sheo Bhat Sathe joined him. But the raid failed. On April 7, there was a skirmish between Emperor's vanguard which had crossed the Damodar, and the

English force. The Emperor beat a hurried retreat and arrived before defenceless Patna. But Capt. Knox relieved it on April 28. The Emperor raised the siege and fell back on Rani Sarai (30th April), where he was joined by M. Jean Law. After lingering for two months, and disheartened at the defeat of Khadim Husain by Knox at Hajipur (19 June), Shah Alam retired from the Province and reached the Yamuna in August, 1760.

3. *Third Expedition (1760-61)*

At the end of the rainy season of 1760 Shah Alam invaded Bihar for the third time, accompanied by J. Law and his Frenchmen. On January 15, 1761, Col. Carnac defeated him and captured Law and his French officers.

Immediately after the battle with the Emperor, Col. Carnac sent to him Raja Shitab Ray with terms of peace. Shah Alam now sued for mercy of the English, saw Carnac at Gaya (February, 6), and was escorted by him to Patn a. Here the new Nawab Mir Kasim waited on him (March, 12). In the meantime, Abdali had recognized Shah Alam as Emperor, and the latter concluded a treaty with the English. Mir Kasim received investiture as Subahdar of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, and engaged to pay an annual revenue of 24 lakhs of Rupees. Shah Alam departed from Patna with the Wazir of Avadh, Najib-ud-daulah and other Afghan Chiefs and marched towards his capital He was escorted by Col. Carnac to the boundaries of the Province of Bihar and made a tender to the English of the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa, for which and all their other privileges he offered to grant *firmans* whenever the petition by them could be presented in form.

B. MIR JAFAR AND MIR KASIM[15]

It is interesting to note that the first two Nawabs, whom the English themselves set up in Bengal, were very desirous of throwing off the yoke of the British. As regards

Mir Jafar, many contemporary English writers, such as Vansittart, Verelst, Holwell and Scrafton refer to his attempt to get rid of the English and of those members of the Court who were friendly with the English. Holwell categorically asserts that a party headed by Miran and Raj Ballabh "were daily planning schemes to shake off their dependence on the English ; and continually urging to the Nawab, that till this was effected his Government was a name only. The Nawab fell too soon into these sentiments. The first step taken to accomplish this measure of independence was to assassinate, and take off under one pretence or other, every minister and officer at the Durbar, who they knew were attached to the English."[16] "The next project of the *Durbar* appeared, by every concurring subsequent circumstance, to be a secret negotiation with the Dutch for transporting troops from Batavia into these provinces, so that with their united force a stop might be put to the power of the English. This scheme was conducted by Raja Rajebullabh on the one part, and Fucratoojar (Coja Wajeed) for the Dutch on the other, about October or November 1758."

Scrafton, however,definitely rejects the complicity of Raj Ballabh, for he says that at that very moment, Raj Ballabh proposed through him to Clive to replace Mir Jafar on the throne by a brother of Siraj-ud-daulah. Many English writers believe that Mir Jafar attempted to enlist the support of the Dutch against the English. But this was at best a mere suspicion. It may be added that though a thorough enquiry must have been made regarding the alleged conspiracy of Mir Jafar with the Dutch, the Council at Calcutta was satisfied that there was no definite evidence to prove it.

It would, however, appear that Maharaja Nanda kumar, a great favourite of Mir Jafar, was also carrying on correspondence with Shah Alam, Wazir of Avadh, and the French

at Pondicherry, as well as with the *Zamindars* like Balwant Singh, with a view to drive away the English from Bengal. How far this allegation is true will be discussed in connection with Nanda Kumar. But it is difficult to say whether, even if true, these intrigues were carried on with the knowledge or approval of Mir Jafar, and for bettering his prospects rather than serving the personal interests of Maharaja Nanda Kumar.

In any case, it is certain that Mir Jafar did not proceed any further, and it has been suggested by Malleson that the invasion of Shah Alam and the mutiny of Mir Jafar's soldiers at that time had so unnerved Mir Jafar, that he readily sought the protection of Clive, and henceforth gave up the idea of opposing the British power.

Mir Kasim, whom the British placed on the throne by deposing Mir Jafar, also came into conflict with the English. It is not only the evasion of the customs duty and the general oppression exercised by the English officers, but also the open flouting of his authority by them that irritated the Nawab and finally forced him to break up completely with the English. The details are too well-known and need no recapitulation. There are, however, two circumstances in connection with Mir Kasim's fight with the English which need be stressed. In the first place, it was the first and the last real struggle for freedom against the British deliberately organized by a Nawab of Bengal on a comprehensive scale. The fact that it failed miserably is as much due to the inefficiency of the Indian army as the apathy and even the active hostility of Hindu Chiefs against the Nawab. The attitude of Shitab Rai is very significant, and may be regarded as typical in this connection.[17]

In the second place, Mir Kasim was the first and also the last Nawab of Bengal to realize the necessity, not only of a strong army under his own control disciplined

in European fashion, but also of the aid of other Indian powers to fight against the British. The alliance which he formed with Shah Alam and the Wazir of Avadh was undoubtedly a diplomatic move of great importance, and should have been rewarded with success. But unfortunately, here, too, the inefficiency of the Indian army and the want of real co-operation between the Indian leaders led to the failure of this scheme. What was worse, it marked the end of all opposition to the British by Shah Alam and Shuja-ud-daulah, and the former granted to the British the *Diwani* of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa (1765).

It is to be noted in this connection that although there were repeated attempts on the part of Shahzada (Shah Alam), after the battle of Palasi, to get possession of Bengal, it does not appear that he was really inspired by any sense of patriotism, for we find that he tried to enter into an agreement with the British against Mir Jafar. The same thing may be said of the Delhi Government because we find that the Emperor sent *khilat* to Clive, and the Wazir himself pressed the Colonel by his agents to march to Delhi. The Emperor also wrote to Clive against Shahzada. Similarly, though the Marathas helped Shah Alam and even invaded Bengal, it is on record that they wanted to enter into an agreement with the British against Siraj-ud-daulah, and promised them all advantages in Bengal if their plan would succeed.

On the whole, it is difficult to believe that there was any power or important personality in those days who had really the good of the country at heart. Everyone wanted to advance his own interests and did not look beyond them to the larger interests of the country as a whole.

III. THE ZAMINDARS.

The public life of Bengal in the eighteenth century was dominated by the *Zamindars*. The native chronicler

Ghulam Hussain Khan, writing in 1780, denounced them as a "malevolent and incorrigible race", disposed "to display the standard of rebellion and dispute and to raise commotions of consequence". It is hardly to be expected that they would not seek to take advantage of the new political situation to advance their own interests. Besides, they often suffered from the oppressive exactions of the new regime. How far in addition to these motives of self-interest they were actuated by any higher policy of freeing their country from the yoke of the English, it is difficult to say. It is true that some of them joined Shah Alam and fought against both Nawab and the English, but the exact motive underlying their actions is not known with certainty. In this connection it is interesting to quote a letter from the Raja of Birbhum as it throws some light on the inner motives which actuated the *Zamindars*

A curious position arose when Shah Alam, the legal ruler of the country, invaded Bengal, and the British with the Nawab of Bengal, both of whom were theoretically servants of that ruler, had to oppose him. It was on this occasion that the Raja (Muslim ruler) of Birbhum wrote the letter to the President of the English Council at Calcutta. In this letter he observes that "the Magistrate of the country (i.e. the Nawab), who has rebelled against his sovereign, afflicts every man of worth and honour with insults and indignities, from which the strictest obedience is no security.........the principles of your religion ordained that every man should be put in possession of his right; and by your customs too, the King is entitled to obedience.........These considerations added to the long friendship I have had for your country persuade me, that you will engage in no case that shall oppose that of Shah Alam."

As a matter of fact the *Zamindars* rebelled against the Government almost throughout the period of the rule of Mir Jafar and Mir Kasim.

It is not necessary to describe in details the rebellious act of the *Zamindars*. General reference has been made to some of them in the preceding narrative about Shah Alam, as they acted in concert with him. There is, however, no doubt that the defections of the *Zamindars* sometimes constituted a serious menace, as will appear from the following extract from Vansittart's memorandum justifying the dethronement of Mir Jafar and placing Mir Kasim on the throne on 20 October, 1760. After referring to the mutiny of Mir Jafar's soldiers, he proceeded: "In 1760 Bengal was in great danger. Two armies were in field and waiting only the fair weather to advance. Prince Shah Alam towards Patna and the Raja of Birbhum towards Murshidabad, and the Rajas of Bishnupur, Ramghar and other countries bordering upon the mountains were ready to shake off their dependence and had offered considerable supplies to the Raja of Birbhum. The Raja of Curruckpoor had committed open hostilities and taken possession of all the country about Baughelpoor which entirely stopped the communication between the two provinces on that side of the river. In a word, the whole country seemed quite ripe for a universal revolt."[18]

The same view is taken in the *Fifth Report*, as the following extract will show:

"We do not for instance realise that there were in existence powerful chiefs in Bengal, who even after Plassey could set the conjoint authority of the English and the Nawab at defiance. It cannot be conceived that Siraj-ud-daulah or indeed Mir Jafar, unprotected, could have passed through an ordeal in which Alivardi Khan all but succumbed."

One of the earliest *Zamindars* to revolt was Ramram Singh, the Governor of Midnapore. It was represented that he was an enemy to the English and enjoyed the confidence of Bussy and Siraj-ud-daulah, but Clive managed him tactfully. More serious was the insurrection at Dacca

in favour of a son of Sharfaraj Khan, the Nawab of Bengal deposed by Alivardi, but this was also quelled without much difficulty.[19]

In 1760 a secret conspiracy was going on between the Maharaja of Burdwan and the Raja of Birbhum to undo the order ushered in Bengal after the battle of Palasi. Mir Kasim, the new Nawab, got wind of this conspiracy, and warned the Council at Calcutta.[20] There were other more powerful parties to join this concert, which, in point of time, may be called the first organized attempt to drive out the British from Bengal. The Marathas, under their general Sheo Bhatt, and Emperor Shah Alam were also active parties in this effort.[21] The records also reveal that Maharaja Nanda Kumar, the erstwhile friend of the British, was carrying on secret entrigues with the Burdwan Raja and other rebellious *Zamindars*.[22]

The Raja of Birbhum, Asad-ul-Zaman, was recognized as one of the most powerful princes in Bengal in 1756-57, and Clive was anxious to form an alliance with him. In 1760, the Raja took up arms against the British, having, with other powerful *Zamindars*, sent an invitation to the Emperor Shah Alam to enter the Province and promised to join his standard. In April, 1760, the Emperor's force advanced into Birbhum. It had to face the combined opposition of the Nawab's forces led by Miran and the British troops under Major Caillaud. Shah Alam, however, finding the occasion not ripe for an encounter, retreated.[23]

At the end of the year, the Emperor having left the Province, the English and the Nawab Mir Kasim proceeded against the Raja of Birbhum and the Maharaja of Burdwan. Capt. Yorke and Gurgin Khan marched from Murshidabad, and Capt. White from Midnapore. The Raja of Birbhum collected 5000 horse and 20,000 foot and encamped at Kherwah pass. But he was surprised from the rear by Capt. White's forces and suffered defeat.[24] The British had a

particular grudge against the Raja of Birbhum, because he had helped the French, given asylum to the Dutch, and employed 300 Telenga Sipahi deserters from the British army. [25]

The Maharaja of Burdwan also rose in open rebellion. Earlier, in July 1760, his troops actually defeated two hundred sepoys who were sent to arrest one of his servants. [26] At the end of the year, Capt. White, while proceeding to Birbhum, had to fight with the forces of the Maharaja of Burdwan, consisting of about 10,000 armed men helped by the *Fakirs* and *Sanyasis*. [27] Capt. White attacked the Maharaja's forces in anticipation of danger and claimed a victory. "The English, however, perhaps wisely, chose to look upon the Raja as still their friend, and continued him in the Zamindari on terms much below the real revenue due to want of money and other reasons. [28]

In these risings, the Marathas also helped these *Zamindars*. In January, 1761, Mir Kasim wrote to the Company : "I am informed that Shu Bhut Mahratha (Shiv Bhutt) with 2 or 3,000 horse and as many foot has joined the Beerbhum Raja and the Burdwan Zamindar acts in conjunction with them." [29]

Khadim Hussain Khan, the Governor of Purnea, also rose in revolt on this occasion. He was ready to join Shah Alam. On coming into conflict with troops under Capt. Knox and Miran, he had to retreat from Purnea. Later on, he was pursued by Miran and Major Caillaud in Champaran. In course of this pursuit, Miran met his death by lightning, and Major Caillaud had to give it up. Khadim Hussain escaped back to Purnea. [30]

IV. MAHARAJA NANDA KUMAR. [31]

Incidental references have been made above to the intrigues of Maharaja Nanda Kumar with the enemies of the British. He has secured a unique position in the his-

tory of this period on account of the famous or infamous trial for forgery before the Supreme Court in Calcutta and the capital punishment inflicted upon him for this offence. The story of this trial, which involves a judgment on the character of Warren Hastings and Sir Elijah Impey, is beyond the scope of the present work. But there is a steadily growing belief in Bengal, that Nanda Kumar suffered in the hands of the British on account of his patriotic activities in order to free his country from their yoke, and his memory is invoked as that of the first martyr for the cause of India's freedom. This renders it necessary to review his career at some length.

No authentic account is available of the early life of Nanda Kumar. Mr. Barwell, a Member of the Council in Calcutta, gave a fairly detailed account of Nanda Kumar's career in a letter written to a friend in England.[32] It is to be remembered that Barwell was a great friend of Hastings, and as this letter was written at a time when Nanda Kumar had incurred the hostility of the latter by bringing charges of corruption against him before the Council, it is difficult to say how far it is safe to rely on the account given by Barwell. But whatever may be the value of Barwell's account, it is the only record that we have got and a short summary of it is given below.

Nanda Kumar began his life as a minor revenue official under his father and gradually became an Aumil of Hijli and Musadue (Mahishadal) in Alivardi's time. He was guilty of oppressing the *Zamindars* and had a deficit balance of Rs. 80,000/- against him. For this his superior officer dismissed him, confined him in chains and constantly flogged him. Nanda Kumar's father released him by paying the balance, but swore never to see his face again. The later career of Nanda Kumar was also highly discreditable. On one occasion he was severely bastinadoed with a bamboo by Siraj-ud-daulah, but after a great deal of manoeuvre

Nanda Kumar got back into favour and was appointed Foujdar of Hooghly on the death of Alivardi.

So far we have followed Barwell's account. We are better informed about the subsequent career of Nanda Kumar. When Clive decided to invade Chandernagore in 1757, Nanda Kumar was asked by Siraj-ud-daulah to oppose the British army and help the French, if necessary. But he was heavily bribed, and not only offered no resistance to the English army, but also prevented another army sent by the Nawab for this purpose from doing so. It may be reasonably assumed, on the basis of contemporary evidence, that but for this treacherous act of Nanda Kumar, it would not have been possible for the English to capture Chandernagore, and the battle of Palasi might not have been fought.

It is no wonder that after the defeat and death of Siraj-ud-daulah, Nanda Kumar became a great favourite of Clive as well as of Mir Jafar. Nanda Kumar was provided with some lucrative posts under the English Company. He settled in Calcutta and obtained the confidence of Mir Jafar. When Mir Jafar was dethroned in favour of Mir Kasim, Nanda Kumar got in close touch with the former. According to Barwell, they entered into an agreement, and one of the conditions was that Mir Jafar would not "hold correspondence with any person by letter or otherwise himself but that Nanda Kumar should act as he thought it best, and that hereafter if at any time Mir Jafar should recover the Nizamut he would patronize Nanda Kumar with all his power."

Barwell further insinuates that from this time Nanda Kumar "studied every possible method to raise a war and to endanger the Company, whereupon the Governor Mr. Vansittart put a guard of Sepoys upon him, and produced before the Council treasonable letters and copies taken from Nanda Kumar's house." According to Barwell Nanda Kumar contrived somehow to enlist the sympathy of some

Members of the Council and was not only released from his guard at the end of forty days but also taken into favour by General Coote.

Upon the restoration of Mir Jafar to the throne of Bengal, Nanda Kumar was appointed his *Diwan*. The Council was not at first in favour of this appointment but agreed to it at the insistence of the Nawab.

Even during this period of his career Nanda Kumar resumed his secret intrigues and correspondence for which he was later punished by the Company. But it is precisely this sort of activity which has earned for Nanda Kumar the title of a martyr in the cause of his country. It is, therefore, necessary to discuss this episode in some detail.

All the relevant information on the subject is obtained from the Secret Proceedings of the Calcutta Council. Naturally it represents merely the official view about the conduct of Nanda Kumar, and it is unfortunate that we have no means of judging its accuracy by reference to independent sources. But even as it is, the proceedings throw some light on the conduct of Nanda Kumar which has got an important bearing on our estimate of his character in later life.

It appears from an extract from the proceedings of the Secret Commitee, dated the 31st July 1762, that the President laid before the Committee certain information "that Nanda Kumar was assisting in carrying on correspondence between the Sahazadah and the Governor of Pondicherry." After taking evidence the Board came to the conclusion by unanimous vote that he was guilty. He was also convicted in course of those proceedings of carrying on a treacherous correspondence with the Burdwan and other rebellious *Zamindars*, who were in arms against Mir Kasim (it may be added that this charge was also contained in a letter written by Mir Kasim to the Council). The Board thereupon decided that "Nanda Kumar be kept in his own house under

so strong a guard as to prevent his writing or receiving letters." This decision was confirmed by the authorities in England. in their general letter to the President and Council, dated the 22nd, 1764. They observed as follows :

"There seems to be no doubt that he has been guilty of carrying on correspondence with the country powers harmful to the Company's interests and instrumental in conveying letters between the Shahzahda and the French Governor General of Pondicherry." They also approved of the confinement of Nanda Kumar in his own house under a strong guard.

The other accusations against Nanda Kumar refer to the period after the dethronement of Mir Kasim. The main charges are as follows :

1. That Nanda Kumar tried to enter into an "agreement with Mir Kasim whereby he (Nanda Kumar) would engage constantly to send him faithful accounts of all the transactions of the English army on condition that he (Mir Kasim) would appoint him to the Dewany of the Province of Bengal."

2. That Nanda Kumar induced Raja Bulwant Singh of Banaras to desert the cause of the English and join Shuja-ud-daulah against them.

These two charges were fully investigated by Vansittart and from the evidence collected by him there seems to be really no doubt that the accusations were substantially correct,

The third charge was that Nanda Kumar wrote to Ṣhuja-ud-daulah "that if he would drive the English out of the country, he would make him a Nazarana of a crore of rupees and give up the Patna Province to his possession." As Shuja-ud-daulah did not agree to this, Nanda Kumar sent a Vakeel "with a note for several lakhs of rupees, requesting that he would use his endeavours to persuade Shuja-ud-daulah to his scheme. Ultimately Shuja-ud-daulah

agreed and accordingly the Vakeel is stiill at the court of Shuja-ud-daulah on this business." It does not appear from the records who supplied this information, nor does there seem to have been any regular inquiry on this point. The only thing on record is that while Balwant Singh admitted to Vansittart that he had received two or three letters from Nanda Kumar, he said at the same time that Shuja-ud-daulah had received at least fifty letters. When asked whether he had seen those letters he said that he had not, but that being with Shuja-ud-daulah he very well knew that he had received them.

In consequence of the above intrigues which were carried on after Nanda Kumar was appointed the *Diwan* of Mir Jafar after his restoration, the Board directed, in March 1765, that Nanda Kumar should be sent as a prisoner from Murshidabad to Calcutta. It was at first decided that he should be banished to Chittagong, but later he was confined in his own house and was excluded from any share in the administration. It is, however, intcresting to refer in this connection to the favourable opinion about this aspect of Nanda Kumar's conduct recorded by Warren Hastings in a Minute dated 28th July, 1772, in which he upheld the appointment of Nanda Kumar's son as the *Diwan* of the Nawab. The relevant passage is quoted below:

"The President does not take upon him to vindicate the moral character of Nand Kumar. Nevertheless he thinks it but justice to make a distinction between the violation of a Trust and an offence committed against our Government, by a man who owed it no allegiance, nor was indebted to it for protection, but on the contrary was the actual servant and Minister of a Master whose interest naturally suggested that kind of policy, which sought by Foreign Aids and the Diminution of the Power of the Company to raise his own consequence and to re-establish his authority. He has never been charged

with any Instance of Infidelity to the Nabob Meer Jaffier the constant Tenor of whose politics from his first accession to the Nizamut till his death corresponds in all points so exactly with the artifices which were detected in his Minister, that they may be as fairly ascribed to the one as to the other. Their immediate object was beyond question the Aggrandizement of the former though the latter had ultimately an equal Interest in their success. The opinion which the Nabob himself entertained of these services and of the Fidelity of Nund Comar, evidently appeared in the distinguished Marks which he continued to shew him of his Favour and Confidence to the latest hour of his life."

So far as we can judge from the facts at our disposal there seems to be little doubt that Nanda Kumar had made an attempt to injure the cause of the Company. It may also be admitted that he was possibly willing to drive the English out of Bengal. But it is very difficult to ascertain the real motives behind all this. His proposal to Mir Kasim shows that he was probably actuated by the motives of self-interest rather than patriotism. His intrigue wirh Shuja-ud-daulah, if it can be regarded as a fact, may be interpreted to mean that he wanted to expiate his former sin (helping Clive to capture Chandernagore and thereby defeat Siraj-ud-daulah) by making a last minute effort to drive out the English. But this is at best doubtful. As regards his intrigues with the French Government at Pondicherry, the Raja of Burdwan and other rebellious *Zamindars*, they may be regarded as the actions of a man naturally disposed to intrigues, on behalf of his master, than any organized attempt against the English. On the whole, it is difficult to assert, with any amount of certainty, that Nanda Kumar's action was inspired by a patriotic zeal to free his country from the yoke of the British, though it may be accepted that the idea of driving out the British from

Bengal, if possible, was a favourite policy of some leading Bengali politicians in those days.

But whatever we might think of the motives of Nanda Kumar, the capital punishment inflicted upon him had evidently nothing to do with these previous transactions. Whatever may be our views about the legality of his conviction and of the sentence passed upon him by the Supreme Court, there is nothing to show that it was influenced in any way by any previous action of Nanda Kumar against the interest of the British Government to which reference has been made. There is, therefore, no reasonable ground to suppose that Nanda Kumar died a martyr's death.

B. OTHER PARTS OF INDIA.

I. MYSORE.

Having reviewed in some details the early reactions against British rule in Bengal, we may now turn to other parts of India which later fell into the hands of the British. Their next territorial acquisition of importance was Mysore. Of all the Indian ruling princes of this period, Hyder Ali and his son Tipu Sultan were the most uncompromising opponents of the growth of British political power in India, and they realized, more than others, the great peril which it meant to India. Their sturdy love of independence, and particularly the scornful rejection of Subsidiary Alliance by Tipu Sultan, distinguished them from contemporary ruling families. It was to be expected, that the conquest of Mysore after the defeat and death of Tipu Sultan would provoke a violent reaction in Mysore.

The British forestalled this by placing a member of the old Hindu ruling family on the throne. This must have neutralized, to a large extent, the disaffection of the people who were overwhelmingly Hindu. The British no doubt intended to demonstrate by this step that they were deliverers

of the country, and simply restored the legitimate Hindu rulers by driving out the usurping Muslim upstart Chiefs. As in the case of Bengal, the recent usurpation by Hyder Ali and the indirect nature of the exercise of authority by the British, must have dulled to a large extent any sentiment of patriotism or loyalty to the late ruling family that might normally have been aroused by the conquest of the British.

Nevertheless, a violent reaction against the political change was not altogether wanting. Apart from the feeble opposition of the poligars or local Chiefs, we find a Chief of Bednore, named Dhoondia, at the head of organized resistance against the British. Unfortunately, all that we know of him comes from the British sources which naturally depict him as an adventurer and a brigand. But even the bare facts known from them seem to invest his efforts with a more laudable character.[33]

Dhoondia Bagh, a Maratha by birth, was a military officer under Tipu. Immediately after Tipu's death he put himself at the head of a body of soldiers, mostly those disbanded from Tipu's army, and secured, without any fight, a number of important forts in Bednore District. At last his movements attracted the notice of the British, and two armies were sent to attack Bednore from two different directions. Dhoondia was defeated in several engagements by the British forces, who also captured several of his forts. Dhoondia fled and took shelter in the Maratha territory, where he "seized and garrisoned several forts." Having been securely established in these forts, he tried to organize a "political confederacy" against the British. "The discontented within the Company's territories and those of their allies were invited by letters, written in his name, to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by his invasion of Mysore, and rise simultaneously against the objects of their hate."[34]

Dhoondia's opposition was now regarded as of such a formidable character that an army under Arthur Wellesley, the future Duke of Wellington, was sent against him. After having secured the permission of the Marathas to enter their territory, Wellesley advanced against the enemy. "After driving the enemy before him for some weeks, and capturing several places which had been occupied by Dhondia", Wellesley surprised and completely destroyed a division of his army while encamped on the right bank of the Malprabha.

After having "gained possession of several forts which were held by parties in the interest of" Dhoondia, the British army pursued him into the territory of the Nizam. On September 10, 1800, Wellesley encountered Dhoondia's army, and though it was "strongly posted", defeated it completely. Dhoondia fell fighting to the last.

Dhoondia has been described in British sources as "an adventurer", "a robber and a murderer by profession," "despicable", and similar other opprobrious names. This hardly fits in with the account of the campaign culled above from British sources. He had evidently allies over extensive areas, many of whom were in possession of forts. A bandit could hardly organize a political confederacy against the British and fight for such a long time against a well-equipped British army. Even Thornton grudgingly admits thst Dhoondia's "character and his attempt may be regarded as having gained something of dignity from the fact of the greatest general of modern times having taken the field against him." [35] He should rather be looked upon as typifying the spirit of hostility and resistance against the British that manifested itself after the conquest of Mysore.

II. TRAVANCORE.

The common fear of Hyder Ali had established a sort of alliance between Travancore and the British. In the

treaty of 1784 between the British and Tipu Sultan, Travancore was expressly mentioned as an ally of the former, and Tipu's invasion of Travancore in 1790 was one of the causes that led to the Third Mysore War. In 1795 a Subsidiary Treaty was concluded between the British Government and the Raja of Travancore by which the latter engaged to assist the former with troops in times of war. By a later treaty in 1805 this aid was commuted for an annual tribute, and the British were authorized to control the internal administration. Thus, by the usual process, Travancore, once a free ally, was converted into a subordinate Tributary State, and put practically under the domination of the British Resident.

Col. Macaulay, the Resident in 1808, was of an overbearing temper, and gave grave provocation [36] to the Dewan Velu Tampi, "in whose hands the Raja had suffered the whole power of the state to fall." The Dewan, a shrewd diplomat, began to think of removing the yoke of ihe British. Unfortunately, we have no independent means of judging his policy and activities. The following account from British sources sums up the incident as looked at from a British point of view.

'Towards the close of the year 1808, it became suspected that the Dewan entertained views of direct hostility. It has been ascertained that communications had taken place between the Dewan and some Americans, who had recently arrived from Persia. The nature of these communications was kept secret, but they were followed by overtures from an agent of the Dewan to the Raja of Cochin, for entering into joint measures in opposition to the British power. It was reported that a French force would land on the coast of Malabar in the course of January, and in anticipation of this event the Dewan urged the Raja of Cochin to prepare to unite himself with Travancorians and French, for the purpose of expelling the English from the country.'[37]

The Dewan made extensive military preparations. "The people were trained to warlike exercises, and large supplies of arms were obtained. The object of these proceedings was all but avowed, and it was currently reported that emissaries had been sent to the Isle of France to solicit a reinforcement of artillery."

Open hostilities began with an attack upon the Resident's house at midnight on December 28, 1808 A. D. Several vessels were sent conveying British reinforcements to Travancore, and one of these having touched at Aleppo, the whole party consisting of 34 men were induced to disembark and treacherously murdered. There were also several engagements between the British troops and the army of Travancore at and near Quilon.

"Almost simultaneously with the arrival of the news of these events at Fort St. George, the Government of that Presidency received from the Collector in Malabar the translation of a letter addressed by the Dewan of Travancore to the Zamorin Rajah in Malabar, and which had been confidentially communicated by the Zamorin's minister. It was an extraordinary composition, appealing to the attachment felt by the natives to their ancient superstitions, and expressing violent apprehension of the Christian faith. To resist this, the Zamorin was exhorted to rise against the British, who were to be forthwith expelled, and no amity thenceforward maintained with them. The Zamorin was informed that hostilities had begun, and that within eight days the Company's battalions would be compelled to evacuate Quilon.

"Some further communication with the Zamorin's minister took place through a confidential agent whom the Dewan deputed to hold a conference with him. On the Zamorin's minister suggesting the imprudence of a small state rising in hostility against so vast a power as the British, the Dewan's agent, after adverting to the application made to

the Isle of France for assistance, said that it was well known that the greater proportion of the Company's forces would soon be engaged in the Maratha war, and in the defence of their northern frontier against an invasion of the French."[38]

This communication is of special interest as it shows that the knowledge and intelligence of Indian rulers, both about international and internal situation, were much greater than we usually give them credit for. The British writer, from whose book we have quoted above, justly remarks: "Thus did the accessibility to invasion of our northern frontier give confidence to those hostile to our power, and thus early were our enemies aware of the existence of that Maratha combination, which it took several years to mature for action."[39]

It is unnecessary to describe in detail the military campaign. It was of course an unequal fight and the result was a foregone conclusion. Three Divisions of British army advanced from three different directions to help the British army already stationed at Quilon. The Dewan did not receive assistance from any quarter; still he fought bravely and, being successively defeated in several engagements, fled towards the mountains. Being abandoned by his own master and relentlessly pursued by the British, he went to a temple and "put an end to his life, by stabbing himself in various places."

III, MAHARASHTRA

Of all the people of India the Marathas had the greatest reason to dislike the rule of the British. When the British laid the foundations of their rule in India, the Marathas were the greatest political power, and they retained this position of supremacy even after the fatal battle of Panipat. They were the only people who fought on equal terms with the British, after the latter had established

their domination in Bengal and Madras and virtual anthority in Avadh and other parts. They had lost their chance of establishing supremacy in India, but even though divided among several principalities, they could still look forward to the continuous enjoyment of political authority over a considerable part of North India and the Deccan. Yet the disunion and rivalry among the Maratha Chiefs, and the wicked character and short-sighted policy of their nominal head, the Peshwa, enabled the British to establish their authority over Maharashtra, the home province of the Marathas and the seat of their central authority.

It could be hardly expected that the proud Marathas would accept, without challenge, the British suzerainty over their head. The reaction was swift and strong, and for the first time the English had to face the full armed strength of the Maratha Chiefs, Sindhia, Bhonsla and Holkar. But unfortunately they could not combine their resources for a joint action. So victory rested with the British, and by 1805 A.D. not only the Peshwa but all the other Maratha Chiefs had to acknowledge the authority of the English in a more or less degree.

Like Mir Jafar in Bengal, even the Peshwa Baji Rao II, who owed his throne to the British help, sought to rid himself of the yoke which his own imprudent policy had imposed upon him. He now engaged in intrigues to free himself from the galling servitude, and, as in the case of Travancore, it was the minister, Trimbakji Danglia, who was the leading figure in this movement for freedom. Trimbakji's policy and character have been represented in the blackest character by the British, and there being no other source of information, the historians have accepted this view. It is unnecessary to review in detail the activities of Trimbakji or Baji Rao II, as depicted by the British, beyond emphasizing certain aspects which are generally overlooked.

The gravamen of the charges against Trimbakji is the foul murder of Gangadhar Sastri, the agent of the Gaekwar, at Poona. It is to be remembered that the Gaekwar was completely subservient to the British, and was the only Maratha Chief who did not join the Maratha confederacy in its fight against the British, either in 1803-5 or in 1817-18. It is also on record that the appointment of Sastri "was regarded with dislike and apprehension" by the Peshwa, who raised objections to receive him even before his arrival. On the other hand, the British authorities showed an unusual interest in him, even far greater than the Government of Barodā. In consideration of his services an annual grant of sixty thousand Rupees was settled on his family by the Baroda Government. The fact that this allowance was practically guaranteed by the Company's Government, though there was no formal ratification of it in writing, hardly leaves any doubt that this enormous amount was fixed at the behest of the British. The most curious thing is that when at a later date the Gaekwar reduced this allowance, the British authorities remonstrated and, this being of no avail, ultimately forced him to pay the full amount with all arrears.[40]

This undue zeal for Gangadhar Sastri was also shown in the relentless pursuit of his murderer by the British Resident at Poona. "The Peshwa was informed that the public voice had been unanimous in accusing Trimbakji as the instigator of the crime." Who constituted the public, and how their voice was ascertained, would always remain a mystery. But although there was no evidence against Trimbakji, the Resident insisted that he must be immediately put under arrest. The Peshwa agreed to arrest him immediately after his guilt was proved. The Resident pressed hard, and the Peshwa resisted for long this act of injustice. He held that the arrest of Trimbakji should be preceded by an investigation into the charges, whereas

the Resident insisted upon the arrest as an indispensable preliminary to a fair or effectual investigation. After a protracted negotiation, and the delivery of what was practically an ultimatum, the Peshwa confined Trimbakji in one of his hill-forts. But the Resident insisted on his surrender to the British Government, while at the same time he sent a private communication to the minister to the effect that after Trimbakji was in British custody, no further inquiry would take place. Ultimately, the Peshwa yielded and handed over Trimbakji to the Resident, who placed him in strict confinement in the fort of Tannah.[41]

In the light of the above proceedings it would not be unreasonable to conclude that the British authorities, who regarded Trimbakji as "the supple agent in the political intrigue of the Peshwa", imported Gangadhar Sastri to Poona to thwart his plans, and the murder of Sastri was seized upon as good excuse for securing control over the person of Trimbakji. There was no doubt, after all, that the murder was done with a political object, and not a private deed of revenge. Even if, therefore, Trimbakji was implicated in it—and this was at best a suspicion—the guilt attached really to the Peshwa, of whom he was a servant and in whose interest the crime was perpetrated. The historian Thornton, who fully appreciated this point of view, defended the action on the ground that as any action against the Peshwa "might possibly light up the flames of war through a large portion of India, it was deemed advisable, on the principles of expediency, to suffer the guilty sovereign to escape the doom he merited, and to be content with the surrender of his instrument."[42]

Unfortunately for the British, the plan did not succeed. Trimbakji found means to escape from the fort. How he managed to do so has never been ascertained beyond doubt. But a story recorded by Bishop Heber, a contemporary writer, shows that the popular sentiment

was all in his favour and looked upon him as the leader of freedom movement in the Deccan.[43]

The escape of Trimbakji was followed by warlike preparations. "Considerable bodies of horse and foot were collected and recruitment was actively going on throughout the Peshwa's dominions". At the same time signs were not wanting "that the Peshwa was exercising, and had long been employing, all his influence to undermine the British power in India." Thornton observes: "At this period, indeed, the seeds of hatred to British influence were scattered throughout India with an unsparing hand, and the Peshwa was the prime instigator and fomenter of the hostile feeling."[44] Whatever truth there might be in this there is no doubt that he intrigued with all the Maratha Chiefs. Gaekwar evidently did not agree to join the Peshwa, and Sindhia was effectively prevented from doing so by the conclusion of a new treaty by which a British garrison was placed in his territory and British officers watched his army. The other two, Bhonsla and Holkar, espoused the cause of the Peshwa.

In the meantime, alarmed by the secret intrigues and war time preparations of the Peshwa, the British Resident forced him to sign a most humiliating treaty by which the great Maratha Confederacy was dissolved and the Peshwa renounced all connection with the other Maratha Powers. Further, instead of furnishing a certain number of troops, as stipulated in the earlier treaty, he was now required to provide funds to enable the British to maintain a contingent of equal strength.

The cup was now full to the brim, and it was not long before the Peshwa was actually engaged in hostilities. The events are too well-known to be repeated here. Suffice it to say that the Peshwa was defeated in successive engagements, and after a great deal of wandering, ultimately surrendered to the British. He lost his dominions

and settled in Bithur on a pension of eight lakhs of Rupees a year. The Bhonsla Chief Appa Sahib was defeated at Sitabaldi, and Holkar at Mahidpur.

It is necessary to say a few words about these military engagements. It is generally admitted that much depended on the result of the first encounters. As Thornton has very justly remarked, if the results of the first engagement of the British with the Peshwa and Bhonsla had "been different, the treaties by which many of the hollow allies of the British Government had bound themselves would have been given to the winds, and the greater part of the Deccan would have been arrayed against the power whose success held them in awe."[45] Yet, on a normal calculation, the chances of success both of the Peshwa and Bhonsla were really very good. In the first encounter at Poona, "the strength of the British force was about two thousand eight hundred, while the Peshwa's army was composed of not less than twenty-five thousand men."[46] The latter had the great advantage of the initiative, and yet it was repulsed. In the next battle at Corygaum, twenty thousand horse and eight thousand foot of the Peshwa were opposed to a British detachment consisting of about six hundred infantry with about three hundred auxiliary horse, and were yet obliged to abandon the village.[47] At Nagpur a British force of less than fourteen hundred men successfully resisted Bhonsla's army of about eight thousand infantry and twelve thousand cavalry supported by thirty-five guns. The same story was repeated at Mahidpur where the small British army crossed a river in the face of the force of Holkar, 20,000 strong, who fled leaving three thousand dead on the field and the whole of their artillery, amounting to above sixty pieces, The loss of the British was only 778 in killed and wounded.

It is difficult to account for all these defeats except on the supposition that the military efficiency of India n soldiers, including the Marathas, was hopelessly poor. When we remember that the victory in any one of these fights might have turned the scale in favour of the Indians, we cannot but feel that the struggle for freedom or movement to drive out the British, launched by the Peshwa, was not perhaps ill conceived, but failed miserably because of the inordinate superiority of the British military organization as compared with the Indian. It si interesting to note in this connection that this struggle against the British had a great deal of popular sympathy behind it. It is said that when Holkar's Government decided to declare war, after removing the anti-war Party from office, the soldiers were so gratified that they "proposed to sign an acquittance-roll for the whole of the arrears of pay due to them." When the defeated Chiefs agreed to surrender their forts to the British, the latter did not find it an easy task to secure many of them, as their commanders defied the Government order and refused to surrender till vanquished anew. All these invest the effort of the Peshwa and the other Maratha Chiefs with the character of a Maratha national movement to drive out the British.

CHAPTER IV

EARLY MOVEMENTS FOR DRIVING OUT THE BRITISH.

1. ALL INDIA CONFEDERACIES.

After the grant of *Diwani* and treaties with Shah Alam and Shuja-ud-daulah, the Nawab of Avadh,[1] the position of the British became secure in Bengal and Bihar. But this very stability created suspicion and hatred against them amongst the independent ruling powers in India, particularly the Marathas, Nizam and Hyder Ali. Although their policy was often dictated by narrow-minded self-interest, they could not be altogether indifferent to the growing power and prestige of the British which constituted a menace not only to their own power, but also to the freedom of India as a whole. That this aspect of the political situation in India was not altogether absent from the minds of the chief ruling powers is proved by the fact that they formed plans from time to time for concerted action against the British. Inspired by their example, or actuated by other motives, some lesser powers, and sometimes even the general populace, manifested bitter feelings of hostility against the alien rulers. This found expression in the popular cries to "drive out the British", which accompanied, on occasions, an open resistance against the British authority by even minor local powers.

The earliest instance of a plan of concerted action to drive out the British goes back to the year 1778 or 1779 A. D. when the English were involved in a war with the Marathas and the French in India. On this

occasion Hyder Ali of Mysore, almost all the Maratha Chiefs, and the Nizam organized a grand confederacy for making a simultaneous attack against the British from their respective headquarters. It was an ingenious plan and there was every chance of its being successful. Unfortunately, the superior statesmanship of Hastings ensured its failure by drawing away the Nizam from this alliance. But the records of the British Government leave no doubt about the conspiracy and the serious view that the British Government took of it.

Towards the close of the eighteenth century, about A. D. 1795, we find again a similar attempt on the part of the Indian Powers to drive out the British from India. There was an understanding between Zaman Shah of Kabul, Tipu Sultan, Sindhia, Asaf-ud-daulah, Nawab of Avadh, a refugee prince from Delhi, and Ghulam Muhammad, the defeated Ruhela Chief. The details of this ccnspiracy are not known, but it is referred to by Cunningham.[2]

It is interesting to note that on both these occasions we find an insurrection against the British in their own dominions. Each of these, originally due to the action of a Chief of minor importance, gradually assumed the character of a popular revolt. Both again involved more or less the same region,—a part of Eastern U. P. In view of the fact that the civil population of precisely the same region took an active part in the great outbreak of 1857, it is of some interest to give an account of the two earlier outbreaks. This is of special importance, because though both the revolts are well-known to students of Indian history, their popular character is not generally recognized, and their possible connection with the two all-India confederacies against the British, mentioned above, are not usually suspected.

II. CHAIT SINGH

The earlier of these two revolts was occasioned by the tyrannical measures taken by Warren Hastings against Chait Singh, the Raja of Banaras. He was the son of Balwant Singh, whose support of Shuja-ud-daulah, against the British, through the intervention of Nanda Kumar, formed a charge against the latter, as mentioned above.[3] Banaras originaliy formed a part of the dominion of Avadh. But in 1775, after the death of Shuja-ud-daulah, the Nawab Wazir of Avadh, his successor, Asaf-ud-daulah, in a new treaty with the British, ceded the province of Banaras, including all the districts dependent on Raja Chait Singh, to the East India Company. Chait Singh was confirmed in his possession as *Zamindar*, with full rights, on condition of paying the stipulated amount of tribute. But additional subsidies were demanded by Hastings during the war with the French and realized for three years with great severity. Hastings always adopted a very severe attitude in enforcing demand upon Chait Singh ; so a delay on the part of Chait Singh to pay the subsidy for the fourth year and furnish a body of cavalry, in addition, infuriated the Governor-General. The British Resident at Banaras was asked to demonstrate very forcibly to the Raja the nature of his position. Repeated demands were made for money, and a part was paid in time, and the balance about three months later. But because the whole amount was not paid in time, it was decided to impose a fine of Rupees fifty lakhs on the Raja.[4]

It is generaliy held that the bitter spirit shown by Hastings was, at least partly, due to a personal animus against Chait Singh, who had deputed a man to Clavering when the latter sought to wrest authority from the Governor-General in June, 1777.[5]

Warren Hastings himself proceeded to Banaras to extort the amount and punish the Raja for the "spirit of independency which he had for some years assumed."[6] It was presumed rhat the Raja did not want to give any money nor military aid to the British.[7] After reaching Banaras on 14 August, 1781, the Governor-General asked the Raja to explain his conduct.[8] Not satisfied with his explanation, the Resident was ordered to put the Raja under arrest in his palace at Shivalaghat. Resident Markham executed this task with the help of two Companies of sepoys, in the early hours of August 16, 1781. The news of the arrest of the popular Raja spread like wildfire in the city of Banaras and the country-side. The high-handedness of the British Governor-General inflamed the people. A large body of armed men from Ramnagar, on the other side of the river Ganga, crossed the river and surrounded the place where Chait Singh was put under arrest. The guard and the British officers, altogether numbering 205, were killed or disabled, and Raja Chait Singh escaped by a window opening at the back of the palace towards the river.[9]

On 20 August, 1781, the British forces attacked the fort of Ramnagar on the opposite side of the Ganga, with reinforcements from Mirzapur and Chunar. The people offered a strong opposition to the troops; an entire Company was entangled in the narrow streets and was annihilated by the enraged populaçe. Two officers, Capt. Mayaffre and Capt. Doxatt, lost their lives, and of the troops 135 were killed and 72 wounded. The city was full of rebels, and Warren Hastings fled by night with his remaining troops to Chunar.

Operations were started against Chait Singh from Chunar. According to Hastings, Chait Singh's fixed establishment exceeded 10,000 men, and all his recruits bore arms.[10] Chait Singh's forces offered heroic resistance to the

British in their hill forts of Pateeta, Lateefpur and Bijaigarh. "It is remarkable", says Hastings in his letter of 4th September, "that the enemy's artillery and carriages made at Ramnagar are almost equal to ours; their cartridges and port fires compounded with equal skill, and their powder much better."[11] After the fall of the three hill forts, Chait Singh fled with his treasure, first to the Deccan, then to Rewa and Bundelkhand, and finally to Gwalior.[12]

The rising of Chait Singh soon ceased to be a merely local affair. Almost the whole country was stirred by a spirit of insurrection which soon extended to Avadh and Bihar. In a letter[13] to the Council at Calcutta, dated 17 October, 1781, Nathaniel Middleton, Resident at the Nawab Wazir's Court, reported the disturbed condition of Avadh and Bihar during the rebellion of Raja Chait Singh. According to this letter the rebellion of Raja Chait Singh "was but a part of a larger and more extensive plan which was ...prematurely brought forward before all the parties to it were united and properly prepared for action." "The whole country on the east side of the Gogra was in arms and rebellion." The troops under Col. Hannay deserted the ranks. Communications were cut and detachment of troops under Capt. Williams and Lt. Gordon were stranded. The Begams of Oudh and their principal sardars openly supported the cause of Chait Singh. Fyzabad "has more the appearance of belonging to Cheyt Singh than the Vizier," and "has supplied Cheyt Singh with the greatest number of troops." In the same city, 5000 men were assembled with the avowed purpose of rescuing the two principal state prisoners from their confinement, and a plan was hatched to make an attempt on the treasury on Dasahra Day.

According to Middleton a large number of *Zamindars* and *Rajas* received monetary help from Chait Singh and rose against the British. Even the Nawab Wazir and

his brother Saadat Ali were suspected of secretly assisting Chait Singh. According to Col. Hannay, "it is the general belief of every man in this part of the country that the conduct I have related is a concerted plan for the extirpation of the English."[14] In another letter, the same officer asserts that "the present insurrection is said and believed to be with an intention to expel the English."[15]

A rising of such large proportions cannot be explained as due only to the grievances of an individual. It is clear that it was part of, or led to, a general move to drive away the British from these parts of India. Apart from the supporters mentioned above, Chait Singh was helped by Mahadji Sindhia, the most powerful Maratha ruler of those days. Chait Singh was given asylum with his family at Gwalior, where he lived the rest of his life. He died in 1810. Warren Hastings threatened to break off diplomatic relations with Sindhia on account of his giving protection to Chait Singh.[16]

Whether Chait Singh was aware of the conspiracy of the Nizam, Hyder Ali and the Marathas against the British, and, if so, whether his action was influenced by it in any way, cannot be definitely ascertained. The asylum given to him by Sindhia favours this presumption. But there can be hardly any doubt that the serious proportions which his revolt assumed were inspired to a large extent by the political situation of the British in india. "Hyder Ali, Nizam Ali, and nearly all the Maratha powers were either openly or secretly engaged against them. Hastings had expected to secure the Rajah of Berar as an ally; but the Rajah's friendship cooled in proportion as the success of the English declined, and it became obvious that he could not be depended upon even for neutrality."[17] All these facts must have been fairly well-known to the people of Banaras and Avadh. Perhaps exaggerated reports, unfavourable to the English, were

current in the locality; for, in such predicaments the people readily accept as true what they are anxious to believe. It is only in this All-India context that we can understand the wide-spread character of the revolt which followed the arrest of Chait Singh.

III. WAZIR ALI.

But whatever we may think of Chait Singh's rebellion, there is hardly any doubt that the rebellion of Wazir Ali, the dethroned Nawab of Avadh, was a part of the All-India conspiracy against the English towards the close of the eighteenth century. The insurrection of Wazir Ali is well known, but its full significance as an organized, though unsuccessful, attempt to drive out the British is not generally recognized.

After the death of his father Asaf-ud-daulah, the Nawab Wazir of Avadh, Wazir Ali, who was a young man of eighteen, ascended the throne. Though his late father nominated him, the legitimacy of his claim was challenged by his uncle Saadat Ali on the ground of spuriousness of birth. The Governor-General, Sir John Shore, personally conducted a detailed inquiry about the charges against Wazir Ali, and being satisfied about his being a legitimate child of the late Nawab, gave his opinion in favour of his accession.[18]

But, in the meantime, Sir John Shore had instructions from the Court of Directors to increase the subsidiary force at Avadh. Having failed to achieve this even by a personal visit to Lakhnau, he changed his attitude. He found "Wazir Ali's administration secretly hostile to the company", and that Wazir Ali was "fearless, debauched, of a sanguinary and uncontrollable disposition......his conduct fully proved his inclination to maintain his independence at all risks ; on this principle he was considered as the determined enemy of the English."[19] Naturally, Shore was now convinced

of the 'spurious birth' of the Nawab ; he declared that his support to Wazir Ali would prove disastrous to Avadh (?) and to the English influence there, and that both justice (?) and Company's political interest required the removal of Wazir Ali.

Saadat Ali had already made overtures to Shore. He signed anagreement on 21 January, 1798, promising to fulfil Asaf-ud-daulah's engagements in full, and granting additional advantages to the Company, viz., territorial cession in lieu of the subsidy, the cession of the forts of Allahabad and Fathgarh, immediate payment of 15 lakhs of rupees and more by way of compensation for the Company's troubles and expenses in raising him to the Masnad.[20] It is quite clear that Wazir Ali was deposed for political reasons in a most high-handed manner by the Governor-General, and the charge of spurious birth was just a camouflage to cover a sordid political deal. The plain fact seems to be that Wazir Ali was deposed by the British, because he did not agree to the increase of the British subsidiary forces in Avadh,.

Wazir Ali was allowed to live near Banaras with a large retinue and was liberally provided for his maintenance. The great injustice of his removal from the throne, however, rankled in his heart, and no wonder that he would be on the look out for an opportunity to avenge the great wrong done to him. It is likely that he was aware of the secret understanding between the different Indian powers mentioned above. The very fact that his father, Nawab Asaf-ud-daulah, was in league with these powers makes it quite likely that Wazir Ali could not have been possibly unaware of the confederacy of Indian powers against the British. It is clear from the British records that Wazir Ali must have been in touch with some of these powers from the very beginning. The exact plan by which he hoped to regain the throne of Avadh is not known to us,

and there are reasons to believe that his insurrection was somewhat premature.

Suddenly, the British Government decided upon the removal of Wazir Ali to Calcutta. Evidently some inkling of Wazir Ali's intrigues must have reached the British. In his letter to the Court of Directors dated the 12th February, 1799, Lord Wellesley gave the following reasons for deciding upon the removal of Wazir Ali to Calcutta.

"The numerous retinue entertained by Vizier Ali had more than once disturbed the peace of the city of Benares ; and the ordinary military force stationed in the district could not be deemed sufficient to preclude all danger, either of commotion, or of the escape of Vizier Ali. Information had reached me through different channels, which left no doubt on my mind, that Vizier Ali had despatched a vakeel with presents to Zemaun Shah; a circumstance which sufficiently indicates the disposition of Vizier Ali to attempt any enterprise of which the success might be favoured by the approach of the Shah, and by the consequent diminution of the British force in the interior parts of the province of Oudh.

"When the Shah had actually advanced to Lahore and the army under Sir J. Craig had been ordered to proceed to Anopsheer, the Nawab Vizir Saadat Ali applied, in the most pressing manner, for the removal of Vizier Ali to some position less favourable to the exercise of his adventurous and daring spirit."[20a]

Mr. Cherry, the Resident at Banaras, was accordingly instructed to carry out the project of removing Wazir Ali to Calcutta. This gentleman was believed to have taken a prominent part in the deposition of Wazir Ali. This explains Wazir Ali's wrath against him. On the 14th January, 1799, Wazir Ali paid a state visit to Mr. Cherry with a retinue of some 200 men fully armed. After a brief interview Mr. Cherry was murdered. The

house of Mr. Davis, the Magistrate, was also attacked but he successfully defended himself. This was followed by a general rising, in course of which some Europeans were killed. The British troops from the neighbourhood faced a lot of opposition from the city and could not capture Wazir Ali from his residence which was attacked and stormed. Wazir Ali fled through Azamgarh to Nepal. Some of the local *Zamindars* and others, who took part in the insurrection or helped it in any way, were killed or captured after resistance. Wazir Ali himself, after ravaging Gorakhpur, fled to Rajputana, and was surrendered to the British by the Raja of Jaipur.

Even the scanty records that are available show that Wazir Ali's rising was not of a local or personal nature. It was widespread and was part of the All-India conspiracy, formed about this time, to drive out the British, to which reference has been made above. This was fully admitted by the British themselves at the time, as is evident from the proceedings of the Secret Committee. A scrutiny of the papers belonging to Wazir Ali, which fell into the hands of the British at Banaras, revealed "that the conspiracy of Wazir Ali was of a nature far more extensive than the information first received."[21] It was discovered that a treaty had been "secretly concluded by Ambajee on the part of Dowlat Rao Sindhia with Wazir Ali."[22] The principal objects of the treaty were of "the most hostile nature to the Company, and that they were proposed to be accomplished by placing Wazir Ali on the Masnud of Oudh by means of the assistance of Sindhia, and by the establishment of an union of interests between Sindhia and Wazir Ali." According to the British version, "Sindhia gave his support to Wazir Ali with a view to embarrass the British operations against Mysore." The same papers also refer to the possibility of a concert between Sindhia, Tipu Sultan and Wazir Ali. There are also

references to emissaries promoting Wazir Ali's interests with Zaman Shah. The Patna Collectorate records show that Wazir Ali sent an agent named Mulla Muhammad to Zaman Shah, but the agent was intercepted on the way to Attock. This secret link-up between Wazir Ali and the great powers of India of those days, as well as with Zaman Shah who was stirring up the Muslim rulers of India to declare a *jihad* against the British, naturally alarmed the British authorities and immediate steps were takan to counter this calamity. Troop movements were ordered at strategic places on the boundary of British territories, and diplomatic activities were increased in the various Indian courts. The Rajas of Népal, Jaynagar, Jodhpur, Raja Ambaji Rao and Ali Bahadur were requested by the Company to help them against Wazir Ali and his followers. [23]

In addition to the alliances with the important independent powers in India, Wazir Ali received active and general support from the people of Avadh. After Wazir Ali's insurrection at Banaras, a part of the Nawab's troops, sent against the rebel, joined his standard. Wazir Ali "found himself in a short time at the head of an army of several thousand men ; descended with them into the plains of Gorakhpur, and threw the whole kingdom into trepidation and alarm." [24]

Shams-ud-daula, brother of the Nawab of Dacca and brother-in-law of the Nawab of Murshidabad, sent—presumably on behalf of the two Nawabs—two emissaries to Lakhnau, and one of these was subsequently deputed by him to Zaman Shah of Kabul, imploring him to exterminate the English. The two emissaries were also engaged in certain intrigues in the province of Bihar. Among the papers found in Wazir Ali's house "there was a letter from the brother of the Nawab of Dacca to Zaman Shah earnestly imploring him in the name of Islam to destroy the British power. [25] These facts, which came to the knowledge

of the British, explain why the Governor-General regarded the outrage committed by Wazir Ali as "formidable in its appearance and extensive in its possible consequence."

Banaras was a strong centre of revolt. It is admitted by the British that Wazir Ali "was abetted on the day of massacre by a numerous body of men and that the outrage must have been concerted before it actually took place." Major-General Erskine, who was the first to arrive with his troops, reports that as soon as he "advanced to drive Wazir Ali from Madhu Das's graden where he had taken post, a number of people were scattered over the plains and in groups who kept up a straggling fire on us." He also says that within the city "some of Wazir Ali's partisans from the streets and houses kept up a pretty smart fire upon the British soldiers." At Madhu Das's garden, we are further told, "Wazir Ali's partisans made a desperate resistance and fired on the British in all directions ; and it was not till the gates were forced open by the guns that the British soldiers could enter inside ;" but in the meantime Wazir Ali had made his escape.

Erskine further refers to "the spirit of revolt and disaffection which have appeared not only in the city (of Banaras) but throughout the districts of Banaras, Ghazipur and Azamgarth." He also reports that "the minds of the people are still in a ferment." The papers found in Banaras in possession of one Munoruth (Manoratha ?) contained eleven original *Arzees* (petitions) from *Zamindars* in this district (Banaras) addressed to Wazir Ali Khan and also three secret *Arzees* from subjects of the Nawab of Avadh. This Munoruth stated in his verbal evidence that Jagat Singh and many other prominent persons were in league with Wazir Ali.

It further appears that the Raja of Bhotwul (in the district of Gorakhpur) offered protection to Wazir Ali. It was even suspected that the protection and assistance which Wazir Ali received from the Raja of Bhotwul

and his agents were accorded with the sanction of the Raja of Nepal. So great was the 'ferment' in the mind of the people in the city of Banaras, and so widespread was the support to the cause of Wazir Ali from the people and *Zamindars* of the neighbouring district, that General Erskine, in spite of orders from the Governor-General to pursue Wazir, dared not leave the city cantonment, because he apprehended that the consequences of withdrawing his detachment from the vicinity of Banaras would be disastrous.[26]

Men of great rank and valour, like Jagat Singh of Sarnath fame, Sheonath Singh, Bhawani Shankar of Chitaipur, and the Baboos of Pindara fort rose in revolt against the British along with Wazir Ali. Some of them presented unique examples of personal bravery, and preferred death to surrender. [27]

Apart from those who fought on his behalf and died bravely in the course of the rising, the secret records of the Company refer to scores of important persons in Bengal and Bihar who were actively associated with Wazir Ali in a conspiracy to overthrow the British. The District Gazetteer refers to them as "other disaffected Musalmans in Bengal and elsewhere." But even a glance at the names of those who supported him or conspired with him would prove that there was nothing communal about this rising, and many Hindus directly or indirectly lent support to it

Looking back on the whole conspiracy it is evident that the rising of Wazir Ali, which lasted for a full year, 1799-1800, was a revolt of a very widespread nature. The fortunes of Wazir Ali alone were not at stake. It was one of the first spontaneous outbreaks of a large section of the Indian people against the newly established and gradually expanding British rule.

It is not easy to judge the effect of an event like the insurrection of Wazir Ali on the course of Indian history of

those days. But the closing sentence of Lord Mornington's letter to the Court of Directors, dated 12 February, 1799, affords some clue : "But it will require much consideration to devise such a system of measures as shall afford permanent security to your possessions against the ultimate consequences of an event of such evil impression and dangerous example."[28] It is not difficult to conclude that the measure devised by the Governor-General was the well-known system of Subsidiary Alliance which crippled every Indian Prince and was designed to afford permanent security to the possessions of the East India Company.

On the other hand, as will be shown later, the insurreection of Wazir Ali was a precursor to a number of uprisings and revolts against the British in large areas in North and Central India, which reached a climax in the great uprising of 1857.

CHAPTER V.

DISCONTENT AND DISAFFECTION

In view of what has been said above, it can hardly be a matter of surprise that the rapid expansion of the British dominions during the century that elapsed after the battle of Palasi (Plassey) left a blazing trail of discontent and disaffection throughout India. But these were intensified to a considerable degree by many other consequences of the British rule which vitally affected the material and moral life of the people. We can only briefly refer to them under a few broad heads, referring the more inquisitive readers to standard texts on the subject.[1]

A. DISCONTENT DUE TO ECONOMIC CAUSES

1. Ruin of Trade and Industry

The first evil consequence of the British rule in Bengal was the economic exploitation of the country. Both Mir Jafar and Mir Kasim had to pay heavy amounts for their elevation to the throne, not only to the East India Company, but also to their high officials, like Governors and Members of the Council, as personal gratuities.

In addition to this Bengal suffered heavily from the private inland trade of the servants of the Company. Monopolies were established, not only of every article of trade, but even of the necessaries of life, by a shameless discrimination against the natives who were subjected to inland duties. This pernicious practice of underselling the native in his own market, opened a scene of the most cruel oppression, and sowed the seeds of deepest disgust and bitterness

to the rule of the merchants in the minds of the people.

The letters of Richard Barwell show that he reared a colossal fortune for himself by trade of all kinds. Similarly Scrafton charged Vansittart of vast illegal acquisitions. All this caused a heavy drain of money from India which ruined its eeonomic prosperity.

The evils of this wholesale commercial exploitations have been described by many contemporary writers, both Indian and European, and need not be described in detail. They caused enormous drain of wealth from India and an almost wholesale destruction of her industry.

2. *Oppressive Agrarian Policy*

The ruin of trade and industry, the gravest of the evils resulting from early British rule in Bengal, did not, however, stand alone. The peasants, cultivators, as well as the *Zamindars* were equally ruined by the new policy adopted by the East India Company for the administration of the land revenue in Bengal.

The Permanent Settlement, introduced by Lord Cornwallis, ultimately secured to a large extent peace and prosperity in Bengal, as compared with the miserable state of things during the earlier period. But to begin with, it produced many evils. The inexorable sale law against the defaulting *Zamindars*, in its ruthless course, unsettled many hereditary *Zamindars* from their social and economic moorings. Great landholders and semi-royal families were more or less completely ruined, and that, too, in some cases, for a temporary difficulty.

But if the Permanent Settlement ruined the old *Zamindars*, it was equally ruinous to the *ryots*. It did not afford them that protection to which they were entitled by the declarations of Lord Cornwallis. It made no sufficient provision for the ascertainment of the rights which it proposed to secure for the *ryots* by their *pottahs*, so that it too often happ-

ened that the amount of rent which they paid was regulated neither by specific engagements, nor by the established rates of the *parganas*,

As in Bengal, oppressions and miseries also prevailed in other parts of Company's territories in India. In Madras, the Northern Circars were the earliest possessions of the British. But here, unlike Bengal, there were hereditary proprietors of big estates, who functioned as 'Captains of the Borders' and 'Lords of the Marches'. But the introduction of periodical settlements for short periods, with increase of assessments from time to time, sometimes as high as fifty per cent., reduced the whilom proprietors to the position of mere farmers of revenue, liable to ejectment for default of revenue, and subject to new rules and regulations with which they were quite unfamiliar. They were also deprived of the effective authority which they were accustomed to exercise for the maintenance of law and order. All this created a chaotic condition, and generated a spirit of insubordination and rebellion, which caused a series of risings of the civil population. Although Permanent Settlement was also introduced in thse regions, it failed to improve the condition due to over-assessment and the sale-laws, involving the ruin of the old *Zamindars* as in Bengal.

In the Carnatic large territories were in the hands of the Poligars or local military chiefs who, subject to certain services, were *de facto* independent barons within their jurisdiction. The annexation of the Carnatic brought them under the British rule, but they resisted the British system with violent means, and broke out into open rebellion in North Arcot in 1803-5. They were driven out and all the Poligar estates were resumed.

The Ryotwari system introduced in many parts of Madras also caused great hardship to the cultivators by the very heavy assessment which the *Ryot* was forced to pay in full even in case of the failure of crops, and by the

denial of all kinds of private rights in land hitherto possessed by certain classes. The "Village System" which was tried in some areas meant a contract for the total assessment due from a village, which was fixed by the Government. But the assessment in most cases was very heavy, and as all the surplus rent went to the contractor, unauthorised exactions were levied upon the inferior peasantry. This scared away the cultivators to other villages where they were attracted by better terms offered by rival contractors. The result was a constant migration of peasants and the decay or ruin of many flourishing villages.

Both these systems were also tried in Bombay, but with the same deplorable result due to heavy assessment. As Malcolm says, there were "loud and almost universal complaints, in many districts and villages, against what they deemed oppression and injustice ; and in several cases the inhabitants of districts and villages have left their homes to seek the Governor of Bombay in a body, abandoning their wives and children, and their homes for several months to obtain relief from what they deemed injustice."[2]

The periodical settlements for short terms ending in the Mahalwari settlement in the North-West Provinces caused a great deal of sufferings to the cultivators and landholders who had to pay as tax two-thirds of the net produce, the quantity of which was fixed by guess work.

Side by side with the vexatious system of land-settlement the iniquitous process of the resumption of lands was another source of social discontent and unsettlement. By the rule of 1793 the Collectors were authorized to recover by a regular law-suit rent-free lands held without a valid tenure. By new Regulations passed in 1811 and subsequent years such lands could be resumed by the Collectors on their own authority, leaving the aggrieved parties to file suits in law-courts, if they so desired, to recover their lands. Regulation III of 1828 provided for the appointment of

special Commissioners for the investigation of titles to rent-free lands. Regulation V of 1831 stopped the practice of granting Inams or assignment of land-revenue in perpetuity, and in 1845 the tenure of such grants was restricted to existing lives.[3] During the five years before the outbreak of the Mutiny, the Inam Commission at Bombay, appointed by lord Dalhousie to investigate the titles of land-owners, confiscated some 20,000 estates in the Deccan.

B. DISCONTENT DUE TO SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CAUSES

The social intercourse with the British soon grew to be another source of discontent among the Indians. The attitude of a conquering people to the conquered is bound to be arrogant or condescending in most cases, and the Englishmen formed no exception. From the very beginning of the British rule the unsociable character of the Englishmen offended the sensibilities of the Indians. Writing in 1780 A. D., the author of the *Seir Mutaqherin* complained that 'the English seldom visit or see any of us'. There were some special reasons for bitterness in the relation between the two communities. Englishmen in general regarded the Indians as barbarians, and the Christian missionaries held in open contempt the idolatrous practices of the Hindus. Warren Hastings wrote in 1784 that 'a few years ago most of the Englishmen regarded the Indians almost as barbarians, and though the feeling has decreased it has not entirely disappeared'. The truth of this is proved by a book written in 1792 by Charles Grant, an officer of the East India Company, in which he remarks that Bengal hardly possesses any honest and conscientious men such as are to be found even in the most backward countries of Europe. He then proceeds to give a long list of the defects of Indian

character. Even so late as 1855, a most slanderous libel on Bengali character in the most objectionable language, was published in the *Calcutta Review*, The Englishmen could, and not unoften did, inflict all kinds of insult, and humiliations upon the Indians, and assaulted and semetimes killed them, practically with impunity. This arrogant spirit of the Englishmen was a cause of bitter resentment against them.[4]

The right of unrestricted entry of Christian missionaries to India was conceded by the Charter of 1813. The missionaries, in their schools and religious tracts, poured forth venomous abuses against the Hindus, and this considerably estranged the relation between the two communities. In particular, the conversion of Hindus to Christianity—by force or fraud as the Hindus thought—embittered the relations, sometimes almost to a breaking point. There was a general dread among the Indians that it was the deliberate policy of the British Government to convert them *en masse* to Christianity.

The bitter controversy over the so-called Black Acts of 1849 strained the relations between the two communities, The Europeans now began to show those signs of aloofness from Indians which culminated in almost a complete isolation after the Mutiny of 1857.

C. DISCONTENT DUE TO ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM

The masses in Bengal did not revolt against the English nor showed any disaffection to them when they first obtained political power in Bengal. As a matter of fact the people even welcomed the English rule. But gradually there grew a feeling of aversion against them, not so much on the ground that they were foreigners, as on account of the evils of their administration. This sentiment is expresssed by Syed Ghulam Hussein Khan

in various places in the *Seir Mutaqherin*, composed in A. D. 1780.

In support of his general condemnation of the Company's rule in India he has given a long list of grievances, under twelve different heads, against the British administration. The most important of these may be summed up as follows :

i. The English officials are not accessible, and so people cannot place their grievances before them. (The author refers to the humiliating treatment of even respectable persons by the head Harkara of the English officials who must be satisfied before anybody is allowed to see his master).
ii. The difference in language and customs between the English and the Indians.
iii. The system of impersonal administration with which the Indians were not familiar. The lack of personal element in administration is held responsible for many evils such as slowness of proceedings, delay in taking action, frequent changes of policy, etc.
iv. The English have deprived the inhabitants of India of the 'various branches of commerce and benefit which they had ever enjoyed before.' They are, for example, no longer enlisted in the army to the same extent as before, and that causes a great hardship to many.
v. Partiality of the English to their own countrymen, and even to their dependents.
vi. The strange character of their laws and judicial procedure.[5]

The views of Ghulam Hussein Khan, who wrote at the beginning of English administration, are repeated in clearer and more forceful language by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in 1860. He regards the non-admission of Indians into the legislative and administrative branches of the Government

of India as the primary cause of the Mutiny of 1857, the others being merely incidental or arising out of it.[6] He rightly points out that the permanence and prosperity of the Government depend on an accurate knowledge of the manners, customs, usages, habits, hopes and aspirations, temper and ability of the people of India. But the foreign Government cannot possess such knowledge until the people are allowed to participate in the administration of the country. He also very shrewdly observes that if there were Indian members in the Legislative Council, there would have been less misunderstanding, on the part of the people, of the real ideas and attitude of the Government, and a more accurate knowledge, on the part of the rulers, of the real feelings of the people towards the various legislative and administrative measures of the Government.

Syed Ahmad Khan also refers to the exclusion of natives from high appointments under the Government as a source of profound discontent and disaffection, particularly among the Muhammadans, who had until recent times held such positions of trust and digntity, and being unaccustomed to trade and commerce, depended mostly upon service as means of their livelihood.[7]

Syed Ahmad also severely condemns the lack of cordiality shown by the Englishmen towards the Indians, and in particular the officials treating the Indians with contempt.[8] "Their pride and arrogance," says he, "led them to consider the natives of India as undeserving the name of human beings."[9] Such ill treatment, he observes, was "more offensive to Muslims who for centuries past have received special honour and enjoyed special immunities in Hindusthan."[10]

Syed Ahmad also criticizes the administrative and judicial procedure, so foreign to the Indians, and cites as an example the imposition of tax on justice in the shape of stamps.

Thus we find that all classes of Indians were greatly dissatisfied wiih the strange laws and procedures and the system of administration introduced by the English in India.[11]

D. DISCONTENT AND DISAFFECTION OF THE SEPOYS

The discontent and disaffection against the British *Raj* were by no means confined to the civil population, but also extended to the Indian section of the army of the East India Company. In order to explain this, it is necessary to begin with a short account of the Company's army.

The East India Company's army in India consisted of two sections,—one, in which both officers and rank and file were Englishmen, and the other. in which the commissioned officers were all British, but the rank and file, known as sepoys (anglicised from *Sipahi*, meaning soldier), and junior officers, subordinate to the lowest class of English officers, were recruited from various parts of India.

The armies of Bombay, Madras and Bengal were at first independent of one another, each under its own Commander-in-Chief. But towards the close of the eighteenth century the Bengal army became the army of the Central Government, and its Commander-in-Chief became the head of Company's military establishment in India.

As the British dominions extended in all directions, need was felt of additional troops outside the regular cadre. This led to the recruitment of troops who had proved their high military qualities while fighting against the British. Thus irregular battalions of Gurkhas and Sikhs were raised, respectively, after the Nepal and Sikh wars.

In addition to regular and irregular troops maintained by the Company, there were troops maintained by the Indian rulers under the terms of the Subsidiary Alliance, mentioned above, or separate treaties. These were main-

tained at the expense of the Indian rulers who paid in cash or by cession of territories, but were officered by the British and for all practical purposes formed part of the Company's army. For, although theoretically the Subsidiary forces or special contingents were intended for the service of the States concerned, they were freely used in all the wars of the Company.

The sepoys or Indian soldiers for the Bombay and Madras armies were generally recruited from the Moplahs and other Muslims, Hindus from Mangalore and Tellicherri, Tamils, and Telugus, more popularly known as the Tilingas. The name, 'Bengal Army,' was somewhat a misnomer, for Bengal had little or nothing to do with the personnel of the army, and the sepoys of the Bengal Army were chiefly high-caste Hindus (mainly Brahmans and Rajputs,) Jats of Upper India, and sturdy Pathans, also of the same part of the country. The dominant elements, forming a majority, belonged to the State now known as Uttar Pradesh, specially Avadh, which, until 1856, was an independent kingdom, at least in name and form.

The first battalion of sepoys was formed by Clive shortly before the Battle of Palasi and took part in it. They had a brilliant record of service under the Company for a century. They were held in high esteem, and many regarded them as "the finest soldier, tallest, best-formed, and of the noblest presence". There were native officers in command of the sepoys, but they were subordinate to European officers, of whom there were three in each battalion comprising about one thousand men. In course of time, however, the native officers lost their real power by the inclusion of more Englishmen. "An English subaltern was appointed to every company, and the native officer then began to collapse into something little better than a name".[12] The army thus offered no career to the gentry and aristo-

cracy. "The native service of the Company came down to a dead level of common soldiering, and rising from the ranks by painfully slow process to merely nominal command".[13] Thenceforth the soldiers were recruited from the lower strata of society, though in the Bengal Army the sepoys were chiefly of high caste. The sepoys naturally smarted under a sense of unjustified inferiority. "Though he might give signs of the military genius of a Hyder, he knew that he could never attain the pay of an English subaltern, and that the rank to which he might attain, after some thirty years of faithful service, would not protect him from the insolent dictation of an ensign fresh from England."[14]

So the sepoys always nursed a strong sense of resentment at their low scale of salary and poor prospects of promotion, neither of which in their opinion had any real correspondence to their worth, particularly when contrasted with those of their British colleagues. The difference was scandalous to a degree. Moreover, the European corps took no share in the rough ordinary duties of the service. ......They were lodged, fed, and paid in a manner unknown to other soldiers. This contrast could not but adversely affect the sepoys' morale.

"It has been contended that though his pay was small the sepoy was financially well off because his needs were few and his standard of living was low. But the first few months' pay had to be spent in illegal gratifications. Sitaram, a sepoy, says in his autobiography that the drill Havildar and the European sergeant of his company took a dislike to him because he had not paid the usual fee. 'This fee was Rs. 16/-, some five or six of which went to the European sergeant of the company the recruit was posted to.' He adds that 'seven rupees a month will not support either Punjabee, Sikh or Mussulman.' But this remark applied to the post-mutiny

period when prices had gone up. In the easier days before the Mutiny the sepoy did not fare better. We learn from a Bengali clerk attached to the cavalry regiment at Bareilly in 1857 that the sepoys had to pay for his uniform and he bought his daily ration on credit from the bania in the regimental bazar. On the pay day his account was settled and after the deduction for his ration etc., the balance was paid to him. Some sepoys got at the end of the month no more than a rupee or a rupee and a half, in other case the monthly saving did not exceed a few annas. His daily meal consisted of dal and roti, and with his limited credit he could not indulge in any luxuries except an occasional dish of Taro. His life was hard indeed, for the maximum pay that he could expect did not exceed nine rupees unless he was promoted, and promotion went by seniority and not by merit. The sowar was not much better off than the sepoy, for the former's pay varied from twenty-one to thirty rupees and many more deductions were made therefrom".[15] The feeling of the sepoys is reflected in many of the proclamations issued during the Mutiny. "We have ungrudgingly shed our blood in the service of our foreign masters, complained the disaffected sepoys, we have conquered for them kingdom after kingdom until nothing remained to be annexed within the four corners of the country, but what has been the return ? —spoliation of our people, degradation of our princes, and worst of all,—inconceivable insults to our religion".[16] It would appear from these proclamations that the sepoys were influenced by all the causes which provoked discontent and disaffection among the civil population of all classes, as described in the previous sections. This is only quite natural, because they and the members of their families formed part and parcel of the civil population. In particular, they felt keenly the inferiority of the Indians in public service and the insult to their religion.

In spite of their material grievances in respect of pay and allowance, and the prevailing spirit of discontent and disaffection which they shared with the civil population, the sepoys, generally speaking, remained faithful to their masters. But extreme measures on the part of the authorities had occasionally provoked them to mutiny. One of the most serious, which bears a very close resemblance to the mutiny of 1857, so far as the genesis is concerned, was the mutiny at Vellore in 1806. It was caused by what the sepoys regarded as an affront to their religion. When new regulations were introduced in the Madras Army, forbidding the men to wear the marks of caste upon their foreheads, ordering them to shave off their beards, and compelling them to exchange their old turbans for new ones with leather cockades, the Indian soldiers broke into mutiny at Vellore which, with the backing of the members of the exiled family of Tipu Sultan who lived there, threatened to assume serious proportions. This was in 1806, almost exactly half a century before the great mutiny of 1857. Midway between the two, there was a mutiny of sepoys at Barrackpur in 1824 during the First Burmese War. In view of its great importance it requires a somewhat detailed description.

About the middle of the year 1824, the 47th Native Infantry had arrived at Barrackpur in order to take part in some of the operations of the Burmese War. Disputes at once arose regarding the provision of carriages for taking the personal belongings of the sepoys. It was customary for the sepoys to defray the expenses themselves, but on the present occasion bullocks could not be hired and they could only be purchased at extravagant prices. The sepoys, therefore, applied for assistance, but this was refused. This highly irritated the sepoys and they began to manifest their grievances in many ways. In the parade held on October 30, 1824, they appeared without

their knapsacks and refused to bring them even when asked to do so, on the ground that they were unfit for use. A part of the regiment then declared that they would not proceed to Rangoon or elsewhere by sea and they would not move at all unless they were to have double *batta*. The Commanding Officer, unable to subdue the discontent, dismissed the regiment and proceeded to Calcutta to consult the Commander-in-Chief. After his return he held a parade on November 1. At this parade the sepoys burst into acts of open violence. The same mutinous spirit also affected the other regiments which were stationed at Barrackpur, preparatory to their proceeding on service. The Commander-in-Chief, therefore, brought in European troops from Calcutta, and in the next parade, when the sepoys refused to comply with the order "to ground arms," the European soldiers fired against them from a battery in their rear. A Calcutta letter, dated 3 November, 1825, published in the *Glasgow Herald*, gives a graphic description of what followed :

"About 410 held out......Sir Edward Paget gave orders to fire. In a moment after, grape shot and cannon bullets played upon the poor fellows from all quarters; they then threw down their arms and ran; some escaped by running into Hooghly—some were taken prisoners—upwards of 60 lay dead upon the field, and this afternoon about a dozen or two are either to be hanged or shot."[17] As stated in the letter, the rebel troops speedily broke and fled in every direction, but many were taken prisoners. They were tried by a Court Martial and a large number were sentenced to death. A large number of death sentences were, however, commuted into imprisonment with hard labour. The native officers, although not active participators in the rebellion, were dismissed from the service and the number of the regiment was erased from the list of the army. It may be mentioned here that many persons at that time believed that

the want of bullocks and carriages was not the real cause of the mutiny and that actually it was the result of many other grievances among which two were the most important, namely, (1) their having been required to embark on board a ship, and (2) the unjust influence of the Havildar Major with regard to the promotion of the non-commissioned officers in the battalion. The petition, which the sepoys made to the Commander-in-Chief, shows that their main, if not the only, grievance was that they were asked to embark on board ship, and that all the sepoys swore by the Ganges-water and *tulsi*-plant that they would never put their foot in a ship. It has been held by experienced military officers that the destruction of the British detachment at Ramu spread "alarm throughout the native army, and its effect was to damp the spirit, if not to shake the fidelity, of the native troops." The Burmese War was very unpopular, and the prospect of fighting in a country of marsh and jungle was undoubtedly dreaded by the sepoys. The Calcutta letter, referred to above, adds: "By the accounts received yesterday from Rangoon we have received a check; the sepoys did not fight with the same spirit as formerly; they lay down before the enemy, and would neither fight nor run away". It is also a fact that all classes of camp-followers had taken advantage of this circumstance and forced the Government to pay remuneration on much higher scale than usual. The sepoys, therefore, regarded themselves as entitled to partake of advantages "so lavishly and indiscriminately bestowed on men" whom they regarded as inferiors. These were the real causes to which they added bad knapsacks, want of carriages and irregular promotion, etc., which were merely contributory causes.

But whatever might have been the causes, the mutiny at Barrackpur in November, 1824, made a deep impression upon the sepoys, and the memory of the martyrs for the cause of religion was long cherished by them with reverence. This

was brought to light in the issue of the *Englishman* of Calcutta, dated May 30, 1857.[18] In view of the very interesting light it throws on the revolutionary mentality of the sepoys, the extract may be quoted in full:

"A circumstance has come to our knowledge which, unless it had been fully authenticated, we could scarcely have believed to be possible, much less true.

"When the Mutiny at Barrackpore broke out in 1824, the ringleader, a Brahmin of the 27th Regiment Native Infantry, was hanged on the edge of the tank where a large tree now stands, and which was planted on the spot to commemorate the fact. This tree, sacred Banian, is pointed to by the Brahmins and others to this day, as the spot where an unholy deed was performed, a Brahmin hanged.

"This man was at the time considered in the light of a martyr and his brass *pootah* or worshipping utensils, consisting of small trays, incense-holders, and other brass articles used by Brahmins during their prayers, were carefully preserved and lodged in the quarter-guard of the Regiment, where they remain to this day; they being at this moment in the quarter-guard of the 43rd Light Infantry at Barrackpore.

"These relics, worshipped by the sepoys, have been for thirty-two years in the safe-keeping of Regiments, having by the operation of the daily relief of the quarter-guard, passed through the hands of 233,600 men, and have served to keep alive, in the breasts of many, the recollection of a period of trouble, scene of Mutiny and its accompanying swift and terrible punishment which, had these utensils not been present to their sight as confirmation, would probably have been looked upon as fables, or at the most as very doubtful stories."

Such memories and memorials were undoubtedly important factors in the outbreak of the mutiny in 1857.

About a year later disturbances broke out in Assam. On the morning of 14 October, 1825, the Grenadier Com-

pany refused to march on the pretext of bad climate. When the ringleaders were seized and put in confinement, all the other sepoys demanded that they, too, should be confined with them. The Court Martial sentenced all the ringleaders to death; the other sepoys were paid and discharged.

On 24 November, 1838, occurred the first of a series of incipient mutinies owing to non-payment of full *batta* (additional or special allowance). The native regiment at Sholapur at first did not join the parade, but later turned out when the Infantry and Horse Artillery marched towards them. One man in each ten was punished—they were discharged after suffering imprisonment for two years. The non-payment of *batta* led to the mutiny of sepoys in Secunderabad, Hyderabad, Malligaum and Kotah in the Sagar Division in 1842. Some of the regiments were disbanded and the rest were pardoned.

In 1839 symptoms of disaffection could be clearly seen among the sepoys who were taken to Afghanistan during the First Afghan War. The Hindu sepoys fancied that they had lost their caste, for they had to cross the Sindhu and go outside India, which was forbidden by religion, they had to forego their daily bath, take their bread from Muslims, and to wear jackets made of sheep-skin. They, therefore, became disgusted and highly dissatisfied, but kept quiet, determined to ventilate their grievances and discontent when suitable opportunity occurred. The Muslim sepoys were dissatisfied as they had to fight against men of their own faith. Actually a Muslim Subadar and a Hindu Subadar were, respectively, shot dead and dismissed for expressing these sentiments. These punishments further excited the sepoys.[19]

The same mutinous spirit was also displayed on many occasions due to discontent caused by breach of faith on the part of the Government in respect of their allowances.

"During the first Afghan War General Pollock had paid his troops a special *batta* when they crossed the Indus.

This was treated as a precedent and the sepoy expected similar inducements when he was called upon to undergo the hardship of trans-Indus employment. But in 1843 Sind had been annexed and become an integral part of the British Indian empire. The sepoy could not, therefore, legally claim any special compensation for serving in an Indian province, however distant it might be from his usual station. This was a piece of legal casuistry he could not understand. The Indus was still there, life in Sind was as hard as it had been in 1842, and if his claim was legitimate in 1842, how could it lose its validity in 1844 ?"[20]

The 64th Regiment accordingly marched towards Sindh, the sepoys being under the impression that they would receive all the benefits which their predecessors had enjoyed. On the pay day they were disillusioned and broke into violence. They threw stones and brickbats at their officers and even belaboured them. Thirty-nine ringleaders were arrested, of whom six were executed, seven imprisoned for life, and the rest, save one, sentenced to various terms of imprisonment.

The 34th N. I. and three other regiments also refused to proceed to Sindh unless the old pecuniary benefits were restored. The 34th regiment was taken to Meerut, and in the presence of other troops, its arms and accoutrements were taken away and it was disbanded. After this example the other sepoys agreed to march to Sindh unconditionally.

One important point in all these grievances was the unanimous complaint of the sepoys of the 64th regiment that they had been deceived by the Commanding Officer, and it was proved that they were persuaded to go to Sindh on the temptation held out to them of receiving full *batta*. It is significant also that the Commanding Officer was removed, thereby proving the truth of the allegation. "But the damage done was irreparable. The sepoy found that he could trust his officers no more. No wonder that when

the crisis came in 1857 the assurances of Commanding Officers had little or no weight with him".[21]

Similarly, the 6th Madras Cavalry, when sent to Jubbulpore in 1843, was given to understand that their stay there would be short, but actually they were permanently stationed there on a lower allowance.

After the refusal of the Bengal Army to go to Sindh without special allowance, some infantry regiments were induced to go there on the guarantee of the Governor of Madras, who was also their Commander-in-Chief, that they would be entitled to the same allowances as granted for service in Burma. But when the troops had proceeded far they learnt that the additional allowance promised by the Governor could not be sanctioned as it was contrary to Bengal Regulations. The sepoys strongly resented these cruel breaches of faith and made violent demonstrations. Court Martial was held and a large number of sepoys were punished. What was still more important, the sepoys took to heart the lesson they learnt, namely that no reliance can be placed upon promises made by the Government.[22]

Mutinous spirit was also displayed in 1849 by the sepoys belonging to the army of occupation in the Panjab. Towards the end of that year Sir Charles Napier collected "evidence which, in his judgment, proved that twenty-four regiments were only waiting for an opportunity to rise".[23] An incipient mutiny at Wazeerabad was suppressed in time, but a mutiny broke out at Govindgarh. On the first day of February, 1850, the native infantry there refused to take off their accoutrements and demanded to be discharged at once. Though they were pacified after some time, they armed themselves without any order the very next morning, and as it was feared that they wanted to occupy the fort, the European troops suddenly attacked them and order was restored. Ninety-five sepoys were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment and the whole

regiment was disbanded. Though Napier suppressed the mutiny, he sympathized with the mutineers and restored a regulation by which the sepoys were granted compensation for dearness of provisions at a higher rate. For this he was reprimanded by Dalhousie, the Governor-General, and resigned his post in disgust.[24]

CHAPTER VI

RESISTANCE AGAINST THE BRITISH

The discontent and disaffection manifested themselves in open acts of defiance, not unoften leading to active rebellions which sometimes assumed serious proportions. The more important of these are clearly traceable to political grievances. Many outbreaks were, however, of a mixed character ; originating in agrarian discontent or other economic causes, they were gradually fed by religious frenzy or unbridled passions of primitive tribes, ultimately taking a political turn and ending in a furious revolt against the British. But whatever the motive or the outcome of these risings, they show a continual upsurge of a popular character against the British authority, almost throughout the first century of the British rule in India. It is neither possible nor necessary to describe them in detail, or even to refer to them all, but a few typical instances may be mentioned below.

We may arrange them under the following classes according to the primary causes of their origin:

1. Political.
II. Economic.
III. Religious frenzy.
IV. Primitive tribal instincts.

The series of outbreakes, due to above causes, may be regarded as the real precursors of the great revolt of 1857. They form the proper background of that movement, and if we want to view it in its true perspective, we must study its analogy with the earlier disturbances in regard to causes and incidents. A somewhat detailed account is, therefore, given of these earlier instances of civil resistance

as, really speaking, they are the series of links forming one single chain—the isolated ebullitions which culminated in the great conflagration of 1857.

I. POLITICAL CAUSES[1]

Malabar passed into British hands by the treaties with Tipu Sultan in 1792. But, with a few exceptions, the Rajas of Malabar openly defied the British, and were in a state of hostility for six years, keeping a considerable proportion of the Bombay army in constant hostile operations against them. Kerala Varma Raja of the Kottayam family, generally called the Pyche Raja, raised a formidable insurrection and was joined by the Raja of Kohote. A series of fights took place between their followers and the Company's troops, and on at least three occasions the latter suffered severe reverses. The situation became so grave that the British authorities were forced to come to terms with the Pyche Raja who received very favourable terms.

The British occupation of Assam valley was followed by a series of insurrections with the avowed object of driving the English out of the country.[2] In 1830, a Singpho chief surprised the British outpost at Sadiya, and his followers, numbering about three thousand, and provided with fire-arms, spears and swords. entrenched themselves in a stockade. "The Sadiya insurrection of 1839 assumed a still more formidable proportion : Col. White, the political agent, lost his life and eight others were killed or wounded". Similarly, the Tagi Raja, the chief of the Kapaschor Akas, killed in 1835 a number of British subjects, and stirred up commotion among the hill tribes against the imposition of British rule. The Nagas also revolted in 1849.

Bundelkhand passed into the hands of the British as a result of the Second Maratha War (1803-1805). But the new Government was defied from the very beginning by the numerous chiefs entrenched in their forts, nearly

one hundred and fifty in number. The *killadars* of Ajaygarh and Kalanjar offered stubborn resistance to the British forces. Lakshman Dawa, the chieftain of Ajaygarh, when forced to surrender, requested the British authorities to blow him from the mouth of a gun. After he was taken captive to Calcutta, his mother, wife and children were killed by Lakshman's father-in-law, who later killed himself, preferring death to disgrace and dishonour.[3]

A military adventurer in Bundelkhand, named Gopal Singh, who was deprived of his estate by the British, scoured the country for four years. "The marauding attacks of Gopal and his levies, carried out intermittently, ultimately tired out the resources of his powerful antagonist, and, as Mill says, 'are worthy of record as an instance of success',[4] which can flow from personal activity, resolution and devoted adherence of a faithful band of followers imbued with political purposes."

Shaharanpur passed into the hands of the British in A. D. 1803. The Gujars rose in revolt in 1813 on account of the resumption of the enormous estate of Raja Ram Dayal after his death. But it was easily suppressed. In 1842, Bijai Singh, the *Talukdar* of Kunja, near Roorki. and a relative of the late Ram Dayal, broke out into open revolt and was joined by Kalwa, the notorious leader of bandits. The rebel leader assumed the title of the Raja, and levied contributions on the surrounding districts.[5] After a fierce combat in which nearly two hundred insurgents were killed, the mud fort of Kunja was taken and the rebels were scattered. "It was revealed later that the rising was about to be supported by numerous reinforcements coming from many districts—but the conspiracy collapsed."

The Poligars of South India, who had maintained their independence from time immemorial, offered obstinate resistance to the imposition of the British authority. Series of rebellions broke out in different parts of South India—

Tinnevelly, Ceded Districts (Bellary, Anantpur, Cuddapah and Kurnool Districts), and North Arcot—all parts of the same struggle to overthrow the British supremacy. Glowing tributes have been paid even by the British writers to their heroic and patriotic struggle to defend their country and liberty for a long period.

Savantvadi, on the coast of N. Konkan, passed under British protection in 1819, but insurrections broke out in 1830, 1832 and 1836 On each of those occasions the British further tightened their hold on the State, and ultimately they assumed charge of the Government. At the time of the rising in the neighbouring State of Kolhapur in 1844, there was a general revolt in course of which Anna Sahib, the heir apparent, joined the rebels, assumed royal style and began to collect revenue. The rebels even opened negotiations with the native officers of the British army. The revolt gradually spread even to the British districts of Varad and Pendur, but was suppressed by various military measures. In 1858, taking advantage of the Mutiny, the brother of the deposed ruler headed a rebellion which raged all along the forest frontier from Savantvadi to Canara. It was not finally crushed till 1859.

There were also risings in Bijapur district. In December, 1824, a Brahman, named Divakar Dikshit, gathered a band of followers and plundered Sindgi, about four miles east of Bijapur. "He established a government of his own by setting up a thana and making arrangement for the collection of revenue."

"A similar rising took place in 1840, when a Brahman, named Narsimh Dattatraya, led a band of 125 Arabs from the Nizam's territory and captured the Badami fort. He took possession of the town and proclaimed himself 'Narsimh Chhatrapati', and hoisted the flag of Shahu. To sustain himself in power, he plundered the government treasury, and exercised royal power by giving lands on lease to cultivators".

Vizieram Rauze, the Raja of Vizianagram, held an extensive *Zamindari* in the Vizagapatam district, in the Andhra State. He maintained mcre than seven thousand troops of his own and could count on the military resources of other chiefs whom he regarded as his tributaries. The British authorities decided to disband his troops and to add the amount, thus saved, to the rent paid by the Raja. It was also decided to remove his control over his tributary chiefs. The Raja then collected a force, four thousand strong, and fought with the Company's troops in 1794. He was defeated and killed, but his young son Narayan Rauze continued the hostility. "Very soon the young Raja became the rallying point of all discontented elements. Thousands of armed men gathered round him, the leaders collected the *kists* from the ryots, organised the defences of the country, and carried out other measures to supplant the Company's rule." But ultimately he came to terms with the British authorities.

There were two other rebellions in the same region, under the leadership, respectively, of Birabhadra Rauze (1830-33) and Jagannath Rauze (1832-34). There was also a general rising in Palkonda (1831-2).

Kimedi was a large *Zamindari* estate in the Ganjam district. The arrest of the *Zamindar*, for non-payment of arrears of rent, provoked an outbreak in 1798. "The insurrection soon spread into a general revolt, and asumed an alarming aspect. Villages were burnt, grain carried away in broad daylight and the people were ordered not to pay any revenue to the Company under the pain of death". Although the outbreak was suppressed, recurring disturbances of a serious nature continued till A. D. 1834. Similarly many other *Zamindars* of Ganjam district rebelled under the leadership of the *Zamindar* of Gumsur, Strikara Bhanja (1800-1801). His son Bhanja Dhananjaya raised a more formidable rebellion in 1835, and for some time reduced the British Government to a shadow.

On the death of Shivalinga Rudra, the *desai* of Kittur in the Belgaum District, the British authorities refused to accept his adopted son as the heir. This provoked a rebellion in A. D. 1824 for overthrowing the British rule, in course of which several British officers were killed. The insurgents, 5000 strong, shut themselves up in the fort of Kittur, and demanded that the independence of the State should be respected. But they were forced to surrender. Five years later, in 1829, there was again a rising, on behalf of the adopted son, for the restoration of the independence of Kittur.

The evils of annexation in the shape of disbanded soldiery were demonstrated by the rising of the Ramosis, who served in the inferior ranks of police in the Maratha administration. Due to a famine in 1825 there was considerable distress in Poona and the neighbouring regions and the Ramosis rose in revolt and committed depredations for three years (1826-29). The general situation is thus described by Captain Duff in 1832 :

"In the Peshwa's territories in the Deccan, the risk of internal disturbance became considerable. A vast body of unemployed soldiery were thrown upon the country, not only of those who had composed the Peshwa's army, both Mahrattas and foreigners, but those of the disbanded armies of Holkar, Scindia and the Raja of Berrar. They were ready to join not merely in any feasible attempt to overthrow our power, but in any scheme which promised present plunder and anarchy".

Similar evils of annexation resulted in the rebellion of the Gadkaris at Kolhapur in 1844. "The garrison of every Maratha fort was composed of these military classes who received assignment of lands which they held on condition of service. But the resumption of these lands took place on a very large scale during the settlement of the Satara district". 'Being in possession of several forts the

Gadkaris easily enforced their proprietary right on lands of which they were very jealous'. "The social distemper of this semi-agricultural military class was further aggravated by the reports about the paucity of British troops which were sedulously propagated. They began their operations by shutting out gates of the forts of Samangad and Bhudargad in Kolhapur, and the attempt of the British forces to take the former by storm failed. Disaffection spread rapidly, a parallel Government was set up in supersession of the existing one, and all kinds of excesses were committed."

The intolerable misrule in the 'Protected States' provoked a few rebellions. The earliest was a formidable revolt in 1804, in the Travancore State, by the Nair battalions in the service of the Raja. The disaffection, originating from the reduction of allowances, soon took an anti-British turn and the rebels, 10,000 in number, aimed at the subversion of British power and influence in Travancore.

A spirit of general hostility against the British rule was fomented among the Rajput chiefs of Kathiawar by Baji Rao II in 1815-18. So the British interference in the affairs of Cutch, by virtue of the treaty with the Gaekwar of Baroda, led to several conspiracies and risings to drive the English out of Kathiawar. The most formidable was the rebellion of Rao Bharmal II who raised Arab troops "with the avowed intention of expelling the British from his country." Although he was defeated, the struggle was continued by the chiefs of Wagar District.

Rumours of British defeat in the Burma campaign of 1824-26 encouraged some disaffected elements of the locality to rise against the British. The Jhareja Chiefs, sorely aggrieved for the forfeiture of their lands, made an attempt, in co-operation with the Amirs of Sindh, to restore Rao Bharmal to the throne and destroy the British power.

II. ECONOMIC CAUSES

In a large number of cases the disturbances were due to over-assessment of land, heavy exactions from cultivators, dispossession of old *Zamindar* families by process of auction-sale or resumption, and depriving a large class of petty landholders of their tenure based on prescriptive service which was no longer required.

As stated above[5], a large number of *Zamindars* in Bengal showed a defiant spirit from the very beginning of British rule. Even when the British authority was firmly established in Bengal, several *Zamindars* were led to revolt against it. The Raja of Dhalbhum, determined not to admit a *Firinghee* into his country, barricaded all narrow passes, and offered a stiff resistance to the British forces. When the Raja was forced to flee, his nephew Jagannath Dhal was put in his place by the British (1767). But Jagannath proved equally refractory, and when Captain Morgan was sent against him, "he found the whole country up in arms against the British authority; it was no longer the resistance of a local Zamindar; all the landed chiefs of the country seem to have rallied round Jagannath". The Chuars, a class of wild tribes, joined the fray, and committed many acts of violence in A. D. 1770. They completely surprised Lieut. Nunn's force, killed and wounded a considerable number, and cut down pickets of sepoys. Jagannath recruited these wild tribes and in 1773 carried out violent raids on such an extensive scale that the British authorities were compelled to undertake several military expeditions against him. Jagannath threatened wholesale destruction unless he was reinstated as the 'Raja', and, after a long series of attacks and counter-attacks, the British Government was compelled to make peace by restoring his estate.

The exactions and oppressions of the notorious Debi

Singh, whom Burke has immortalised in his speeches during the impeachment of Warren Hastings, led to a violent insurrection of the peasants at Rangpur in A. D. 1783.

In Bishnupur, revolt broke out for similar reasons in 1789. The oppressed masses made a common cause with the marauders who had already begun their depredations throughout the district. Although military forces were drawn out, "all traces of English rule, for the time being, faded away."

Reference has been made above to the rebellion of the Chuars, who inhabited the hills between Ghatsila and Barabhum, in 1770. A more formidable rising of these wild tribes took place in 1799. The whole country-side was devastated and even the town of Midnapore was threatened. The Collector drew "the immediate attention of the Government to the innumerable outrages which were daily committed with impunity, and 'without least intermission'. On 14th March, the Chuars burned down two villages, and on the next day, Government property amounting to 2,000 *arraks* of paddy was consigned to flames in the very large village of Shiromani which was totally sacked."

In 1800 the Chuars plundered several *maujas*. "Madhab Singh, the brother of the Raja of Barabhum, at the head of his Chuar followers, became so formidable that Wellesley's Government had to adopt vast measures for his apprehension. Other leaders of the time were Raja Mohan Singh, Zamindar of Juriah, and Lachman Singh who hurled defiance from his mountain stronghold of Dulma." 'The Chuar insurrection of 1799 has been attributed to the resumption of paik jagir lands in the Zamindari of the Rani of Karnagarh.'

"In Sylhet also resistance was offered to collecting officers, and in 1787, a disaffected chief, Radharam, broke out into open rebellion. He laid several villages under contribution, and murdered a number of the inhabitants."

The enhancement of land assessment led to a serious revolt in Malabar in 1802. 'Led by Edachenna Kungan, the rebels captured the Panamaram fort in the Wynad District on October 11, 1802, and massacred its garrison. In 1803 the whole province was in ferment ; rebellion had extended in all directions, and armed bands openly took the field against government troops.'

"The Poligars of Panjalankurichi in the Tinnevelly District held out stubbornly against British forces, and when Col. Fullarton fell upon them on 12 August, 1783, a bloody battle ensued ; but the fort was finally stormed, and an enormous quantity of guns and ammunition were seized. Fullarton then turned against the Poligars of Sivagiri and captured the post after a desperate contest." The disturbances in Malabar continued till 1812.

A dangerous outbreak took place at Bareilly in 1861. To the usual agrarian grievances was added the imposition of a tax for maintaining municipal police, which was realised with undue severity. Mufti Muhammad Aiwaz, a grand old man, held in veneration throughout Rohilkhand, took up the cause of the oppressed people. The immediate cause of the rising was the wound inflicted on a woman by the police, while distraining for the tax. In the scuffle which ensued, several rioters were killed and the Mufti himself received a slight injury. "The injury to the person of the Mufti was more than the Muhammadans could bear—'sacrilege was added to exaction'. Meanwhile, in his sanctuary at Shahdara, the Mufti unfurled the green flag of Islam which evoked a tremendous enthusiasm among the muslim masses. The leaven of religious discontent infected the people to such an extent that they became furious for actions in the defence of their insulted religion ; the question of tax fell in the background. The Mufti must have forwarded communications to the surrounding districts, and in the course of two days vast number

of armed muslims, particularly from the town of Pilibhit where it produced the greatest tension, and also from Shahjahanpur and Rampur, flocked to the standard for the defence of the faith and the Mufti. They were armed with swords and matchlocks and the number was variously estimated at five thousand or fifteen thousand." "On 21 April, 1816, the insurgents murdered the son of Leycester and even outflanked the sepoys in an open engagement. The forces of the magistrate under Captain Boscawen and Lieut. Lucas being inadequate, the 2nd battalion of the 13th N. I. under Captain Cunningham and Major Richards were hurried into Bareilly." After initial set-backs the British forces defeated the rebels. More than three hundred of them were killed, and a greater number wounded and taken prisoners. On the British side twenty-one were killed and sixty-two wounded.

The landholders in the district of Aligarh were also constant sources of troubles. "The attitude of the Zamindars, who converted their places of residence into fortresses of formidable strength, made the position worse. In 1814 it was found necessary to employ regular troops in reducing the landholders to order, who in some cases were found to harbour gangs of marauders like Badhiks. The country was infested by these gangs of Badhiks and Mewatis who had their headquarters, as a rule, in Mursan and Hathras estates."

"Of these petty chieftains, the most formidable was Dayaram, a Talukdar of a number of villages in the district of Aligarh. His fort had walls of great height and thickness and defended by a deep ditch and by guns mounted at the top. The garrison was about eight thousand strong, of which three thousand and five hundred were horse."

"A whole division under the command of Major-General Marshall was sent against him. It was an act of

pure spoliation, as Dayaram was not involved in any overt act of hostility : naturally he resisted and fought stubbornly against his powerful enemy for a long period from 12 February to March 2,1817."

"Dayaram's fort was considered to be the strongest in India, a 'second Bharatpur', its defences elaborately perfected by the latest innovation. The military stations of Cawnpur, Muttra and Meerut furnished a large train of artillery each. On 12 February, 1817, the town was closely invested and after some useless negotiations, the siege commenced on the seventeenth of that month. After a week's operations, the fortified town encircling the fort was breached, and approaches having been secured, batteries were erected to open fire on the fort. Dayaram's followers fought stubbornly, but could not do much against the besieging army which began operations on 1 March. It was the 'most powerful assemblage of artillery hitherto witnessed in India' : forty-two mortars and three heavy batteries went into action and continued cannonading throughout the whole day."

In A. D. 1817 the Paiks of Orissa also rose in revolt. They formed a kind of local militia, wild and ferocious, yet blindly devoted to their chiefs. The exceedingly high assessment and consequent eviction of *Zamindars* created great resentment, which particularly manifested itself in the district of Khurda whose Raja, held in great respect by the people, was a great sufferer. He was charged with the anti-British conspiracy in 1804, and his estate was confiscated. Khurda was created a Khas Mahal with the result that the lands held by the Paiks for military or police service were resumed. The Paiks broke into revolt under the leadership of Jagabandhu Bidyadhar Mahapatra, formerly the Commander of the forces of the Raja of Khurda, who also was dispossessed of his ancestral estate.

"The spark was lighted by the arrival of a body of

Khonds, 400 strong, from Gumsur into the Khurda territory in March, 1817. This led to the fusion of all the disaffected elements. The Paiks rose as one man under their leader Jagabandhu, and began by committing depredations on the police station and government buildings at Banpur where they killed upwards of 100 men and carried away rupees 15,000 of treasure. The success of the insurgents had set the whole country in arms against the British Government. The rebels then proceeded to Khurda and the number swelled. All the civil buildings of that town were burnt to the ground, the treasury was sacked. The situation became so frightful that the government officers sought safety in flight; for the time being all traces of British rule were wiped away."

There was also an outbreak at Puri, and the Company's forces beat a hasty retreat to Cuttack leaving Puri to its fate. A new detachment had to be sent to subdue rebellion there.

The cultivators of Savda and Chopda in Khandesh revolted in 1852. "The Government was practically boycotted by the people; the people of Erandol refused to lend their carts for public and military service, mamlatdar's messengers were intercepted, and a Subadar-Major was kept confined at Erandol." "Though Erandol was recovered, Savda and Faizpur remained strong centres of disaffection. There the rebels had set up a government of their own in supersession of the existing one. A commitee called panchayat conducted the local administration, collected the revenues and punished the offenders."

Several landowners of Sagar District, Bundelkhand, broke out into rebellion in 1842. There was a violent mass agitation in Surat, bordering on insurrection, in 1844, on account of the raising of duty on Salt.

III. RELIGIOUS FRENZY

The Sanyasi rebellion[6] was one of the most formidable

that the British had to face almost at the very beginning of their rule in Bengal. The movement was initiated by the anti-British activities of two different groups,—Hindu Sanyasis and Muslim Fakirs, but they gained momentum from the support they received from the starving peasantry, dispossessed *Zamindars* and the disbanded soldiers. It is diflicult to ascertain the motives which impelled the two religious groups to make almost annual incursions into Bengal from 1763 onwards. After the great famine of 1770 their activities were increased, and the economic distress drove the people in large numbers to join the Sanyasis and defy the newly established British administration. By the end of 1772 there was a great "upsurge of the Sanyasis in the wild belt of country from Rangpur to Dacca", and they "threatened to sweep away the English power completely". Their fighting qualities were not negligible. In 1772 they defeated a company of sepoys sent against them and killed its commander, Captain Thomas. Encouraged by this success, different bands of Sanyasis, each comprising five to seven thousand under a distinguished leader, overran Bogra and Mymensingh districts. They levied contributions from the *Zamindars* and looted the houses of those who refused to pay. In 1773 the British Government sent Captain Edwards against them. He attempted to overtake a band of 300 Sanyasis, and suffered a disastrous defeat in which he and his detachment were all cut off, excepting 12 sepoys. Further encounters between the Sanyasis and the British forces took place all over Western Bengal and Bihar, but the Sanyasis could not be checked. The Sanyasis, however, gradually moved their operations from Bengal and Bihar and probably joined the Marathas against the English[7]

Next in point of time is the Faraidi movement. Shariatulla founded the Faraidi sect for religious reforms and began to preach his doctrine as early as 1804. But he gradually turned it to political ends aud declared the country under

British occupation to be *Dar-ul-harb* where a true Muslim should not live. His son Dudhu Mian was more politically minded and improved the organisation by dividing Eastern Bengal into circles and appointing a deputy or *khalifa* over each to collect contributions. He sought to unite the cultivators who suffered from the exactions and oppression of the *Zamindars*, but there was a general feeling that the real object of the Faraidis was the expulsion of the British and the restoration of the Muslim Power. He was a terror to the *Zamindars* and indigo-planters, and there were many acts of lawlessness and a severe riot in 1838 which necessitated the despatch of sepoys from Dacca.[8]

The Faraidi movement in Bengal was merely a precursor of the more widely spread Wahabi movement which was initiated by Saiyid Ahmad of Rae Bareilly in U. P. About 1820 or 1821 he began to preach doctrines of religious reform in Islam similar to those held by the sect of Wahabis in Arabia. He collected a large band of followers around him and introduced a regular system of organization. Gradually, the movement took a political turn. A number of pamphlets were written urging a crusade against the British, and military training was given to the members. The headquarters were fixed at Sittana in N. W. F. P. In 1827 Saiyid Ahmad declared war against the Sikhs on the ground that they desecrated holy places, but was killed in a pitched battle four years later. The hostility was turned against the British when they succeeded the Sikhs as rulers of the Panjab. Henceforth the Wahabis carried on a relentless campaign against the British from their remote seat at Sittana to which reference will be made in Chapter VIII.

The Wahabi sect created disturbances in Bengal under Titu Mir who committed violent outrages on the life, faith, and property of the Hindus. He proclaimed the extinction of the British Government and claimed "the sovereign power as the hereditary right of the Muslims which had been unjustly

usurped by the Europeans."[8] The Wahabis established their influence in three districts in Bengal and routed a contingent of Calcutta militia. Later, a well-equipped military force was sent against them. Titu fought a pitched battle and was killed in 1831,

Another religious sect, the Pagla Panthis of Mymensingh in East Pakistan; led an insurreciion against the Government in 1825 under a man called Tipu. He declared a no-rent campaign to any demand over a minimum rent and even assumed royal powers.

In January, 1810, a Muslim named Abdul Rahaman proclaimed himself the Imam Mehdi in Surat, and seized the fort of Nandvi from its Hindu chief. He wrote to the British chief at Surat asking him to embrace Islam and to pay a ransom. Meanwhile his followers fell upon the Hindus with cries of *din*, and assailed them in many ways.

In 1799, Aga Muhammad Reza, an Iranian Muslim adventurer, entered Cachar from Sylhet and made himself master of that country. He overpowered the local Raja with the help of the Naga Kukis whom he won over to his side. To crown all, he assumed the character of a prophet, and "gave out that he was the twelfth Imam, destined to deliver India from the yoke of the British merchants."[9] To vindicate his power, he sent 1,200 of his followers to attack the Company's thana at Bondassye but they were repulsed.

IV. PRIMITIVE TRIBAL INSTINCTS

The Kol rising of 1831-2 illustrates the determined hostility of primitive tribes against all attempts to destroy the independence which they had enjoyed from time immemorial. The Hos of Singhbhum, a Kolarian tribe, claimed that their chiefs had exercised independent powers for fifty-two generations. "The raja of Singhbhum, or the raja of Porahat as he was called, resisted all attempts of the British to penetrate into his country; his Hos subjects jealously guarded the

frontiers and would not allow any stranger to pass through their territory." He submitted in 1820.

But the usual agrarian discontent led to another rebellion in 1831. "The conflagration quickly spread over practically the whole of the present district of Ranchi and overflowed into Hazaribagh, the Tori pargana of Palamau, and the western portion of Manbhum. The villages were plundered and all non-aboriginals were butchered. The remorseless fury of the insurgents was directed particularly against the foreign settlers, and it was estimated that eight hundred to a thousand of these people were slaughtered or burnt in their houses".

"Immediately following the Kol rising, there broke out the rebellion of the Bhumij in Manbhum, in 1832, under Ganganarayan, a disappointed claimant to the Barabhum estate. There was a long family feud between Ganganarayan and Madhab Singh, the *diwan* of the estate. Ganganarayan gathered a large force of *ghatwals* (keepers of the hill passes) and strengthened his position by attaching himself to the peasantry, who were also alienated by the exactions and excessive demands of the *diwan*".

"On 2 April, 1832, Madhab was attacked and murdered : the murderous gang then proceeded to plunder the whole country : Barabazar, a town of importance, was sacked, and all government offices such as the Munsiff's cutcheri, police thana and the salt Darogha's cutcheris were burnt down. With his levies, which included the Chuars and numbered between two and three thousand men, he attacked government troops. The situation became so threatening that in the first week of June, 1832, government force had to retire to Bankura, leaving Barabhum to the possession of the rebel chief. Ganganarayan assumed the title of Raja and levied contributions from the surrounding country".

The Khasis, a hill tribe living in the region between

the Garo and Jaintia hills, broke out into open rebellion in 1783. Four years later, the Khasis of Laur, joined by other hill tribes, raided an extensive area and killed nearly 300 people. The Collector was unable to put them down. "At the end of 1788, a Khasi freebooter, named Ganga Singh, plundered the bazar and thana at Ishamati, and in June, 1789, made bold attack on Panduah which was garrisoned by a force of sepoys, and inflicted many casualties on the rank and file of the army." In 1795, and again in 1825, about the time of the Burmese War, they committed depredations, and after the British occupation of the Assam Valley the Khasis made repeated incursions. Four years later, "a conspiracy was formed to exterminate the intruders. On April 4, 1829, Lieut. Bedingfield was enticed to a conference and murdered at Nungklow, while the other officer, Lieut. Burlton, and Mr. Bowman made desperate attempts to save themselves, but were overpowered by the Khasis along with their followers, fifty or sixty in number, and were slaughtered". This led to a long and harassing warfare. "These protracted hostilities turned into a general insurrection in which most of the hill chieftains secretly abetted the 'Nungklow raja and supplied him with the means of resistance'. It was more or less a confederacy of the Khasi chiefs resisting British occupation of the country".

The Khonds of Orissa broke out into open revolt in 1846, when measures were taken to suppress the customary human sacrifice and female infanticide which prevailed among them. "The rising became general and the warfare lingered for three years. Villages were burnt, strong places occupied, and jungles scoured by troops; but the Khonds, undaunted by defeat, held out in the depths of their highland lairs till 1848, when General Dyce cleared the country of the rebels."

The Bhils in the Khandesh and neighbouring hilly

regions rose into revolt in 1818 and 1819, probably at the instigation of Trimbakji, the rebel *Diwan* of Peshwa Baji Rao II. There were many outbreaks in 1820-25, 1831 and 1846.

The Mers in Rajputana resisted for long all attempts of the British to bring them under control. A general insurrection broke out in 1820.

The Jats living in the district of Hariana, immediately to the west of Delhi, came under the British supremacy as a result of the Second Maratha War. But they put up an obstinate resistance, and there was a revolt at Biwani in 1809. The reported failure of the British in the First Burmese War led to a more formidable rebellion in 1824. The insurgents, consisting of the Jats, Mewatis, and Bhattis, plundered Government property and proclaimed that the British authority was at an end.

The Kolis were predatory tribes operating in a large area from the borders of Cutch to the Western Ghats. They broke out into rebellion in 1824 and committed various excesses. In 1839 their insurrection took a more serious turn. Early in that year "bands of Kolis plundered a large number of villages in the ghats. All the turbulent elements of hills joined them. This time, they were led by three Brahmans,—Bhau Khare, Chimanji Jadhav, and Nana Darbare, who seem to have harboured some political motives. The rising of the year 1839 was not merely the usual explosion of the hill tribes : the reduction in the Poona garrison, lately made, led them to believe in the depletion of the British troops in that district; and consequently they felt bold enough to work for the restoration of the Peshwa, and the insurgents even assumed the charge of the government in his name." The Kolis again revolted in 1844 and were not finally suppressed till 1848.

The Santals, a primitive but very industrious people,

were forced to migrate from their ancestral lands on account of the excessive demands of the *Zamindars* after the Permanent Settlement, and occupied the plains skirting the Rajmahal Hills, ater clearing the forests with great industry and labour. But the oppressions of the *Mahajans* and traders from Bengal and Upper India, who lent them money at excessive interest and illegally recovered ten times their unjust dues, exactions of the police and revenue officials, dispossession of lands by *Zamindars*, and the insults and indignities they suffered from the Englishmen goaded them into rebellion.[10] The dishonour to their women by the 'Sahiblok' specially irritated them.

The Santal rebellion of 1855-6 was marked by some of the worst features of elemental tribal passions and open denunciation of British rule. But it was primarily, perhaps mainly, due to economic causes, and there was no anti-British feeling at the beginning of the outbreak. The main grievances of the Santals were against the "civilised people" from Bengal and Upper India who swarmed their country and took advantage of their simplicity and ignorance to exploit them in a ruthless manner. They turned against the Government when they found that instead of remedying their grievances, the officers were more anxious to protect their oppressors from their wrathful vengeance. The Santals were exasperated "when those among them who had made night-attacks on the houses of some of the *mahajans* were tried and punished, while their oppressors were not even rebuked".[11] Under the leadership of two brothers, Sidhu and Kanhu, who are said to have divine revelation, ten thousand Santals met in June 1855, and declared their intention 'to take possession of the country and set up a Government of their own'. Sporadic depredations commenced immediately, but the movement assumed a formidable aspect by the middle of July, 1855. They assembled in different parts in parties

of 10,000 each, cut off the postal and railway communications between Bhagalpur and Rajmahal, and were in complete control of this area. The Santals proclaimed the end of the Company's rule and the commencement of the regime of their Subah. "Armed chiefly with axes and poisoned arrows, large bodies of these half-reclaimed savages carried fire and sword into scores of happy villages, attacked every outlying European Bungalow, murdered with equal readiness English planters and railway-servants, native police-officers, tradesmen, peasants, their wives and children, and even swarmed up to the larger European stations in the districts of Birbhum, Rajmahal and Bhagalpur".[12] They are even accused of "roasting Bengalis and ripping up their women".[13]

The authorities were taken utterly by surprise, and the panic-stricken natives fled by thousands. Even when troops were rushed they could do little more than hold a few isolated posts. The Santals fled before the musketry but found safe shelter in the thick jungles from which they could carry depredation. Some sepoy battalions fell back before them out of fear. A British force under Major Burrough was defeated, and the situation asaumed "a very alarming aspect". The disturbed districts were handed over to the military and a regular campaign had to be conducted to suppress the rebellion. Even in August, the number of insurgents exceeded 30,000 men in arms. They showed no signs of submission and were openly at war with the British till February, 1856, when their leaders were arrested. Most inhuman barbarities were practised on the Santals after they were defeated.

CHAPTER VII.

THE OUTBREAK OF 1857-8[1].

The discontent and disaffection among all classes of people, and sporadic disturbances in all parts of India, described in the two preceding chapters, grew in volume and intensity till, at a suitable opportunity in 1857, they burst out into a violent outbreak of an unprecedented character, shaking the British empire in India to its very foundations. The centenary of the Battle of Palasi was celebrated with blood and tears over an extensive area amid scenes of inhuman cruelties, which baffle all description.

This episode, highly important in itself, has acquired an added importance, as many Indians look upon it as the first war of national independence in India. How far this view is historically correct, can only be properly judged after we have got a clear idea of the origin and nature of the great outbreak. It is necessary for this purpose to deal separately with the two broad aspects of the outbreak, namely the mutiny of the sepoys, and the revolt of the civil population to which it led.

I. THE MUTINY OF THE SEPOYS.

1. The Beginning,

The immediate cause of the Mutiny was the introduction of the Enfield rifle for use by the sepoys. Early in January, 1857, a rumour was sedulously spread to the effect that the cartridges of these rifles were greased with lard made from the fat either of the hog or of the ox, and the ends of these cartridges had to be bitten off with teeth. It was a sacrilegeous act, both for Hindus and

Mussalmans, involving loss of caste in this world and perdition in the other. No wonder that the news produced consternation among the sepoys, and the idea gained ground that it was a deliberate move on the part of the Government to convert them *en masse* to Christianity. It was not long before this fear produced its baneful effect. On 26 February, the 19th Native Infantry (N.I.), stationed at Berhampur, about 120 miles from Calcutta, refused to receive their percussion caps for the parade on the following morning, and there was a great deal of commotion among them.

The contagion spread and on 29 March Mangal Pandey, a sepoy of the 34th N. I. at Barrackpur (near Calcutta), openly mutinied and called upon his comrades to join him. Although they kept aloof, Mangal Pandey struck a blow at the Adjutant, and when other European officers rushed at him he was still taunting his comrades for not joining the fight for religion. He was overpowered after vainly trying to kill himself, and was executed after trial along with the *jemadar* of the sepoys who stood by unconcerned. The 34th and 19th N. I. were both disbanded.

It was soon evident that discontent and mutinous spirit had affected the sepoys of the whole Bengal army located in remote parts of India, and troubles arose as far as Ambala and Lakhnau. Within three months the rumour about the greased cartridges "had become an article of faith with nine-tenths of the sepoys of Northern India." About the same time appeared the mysterious *chapati* (unleavened bread made of flour) which was widely distributed over a large area causing a vague sense of alarm.

The matter came to a head at Mirat (Meerut) on 24 April, 1857, when 85 troopers out of 90, of the Third Cavalry, refused to touch the cartridge on the parade ground. They were tried by Court Martial and sentenced to ten years' (five years in the case of 11) imprisonment with

hard labour. On 9 May the condemned men were taken to the parade ground and, in the presence of a vast gathering, their military uniforms were taken off and they were put in fetters like felons. When these "ironed and shackled" men turned to their comrades and reproached them for "quietly suffering this disgrace to descend upon them, there was not a sepoy present who did not feel the rising indignation in his throat". Maddened by the spectacle they at once prepared for a revolt.

The lead was taken by the Third Cavalry, to which regiment the condemned troopers belonged. On may 10, Sunday, at about sunset, when the British Rifles assembled for church parade, the Third Cavalry looked upon it as the signal for their own imprisonment. Immediately, several hundreds of them galloped to the jail and released not only their comrades but also its other inmates. Meanwhile the infantry regiments had grown restive, and their officers hastened to the lines to pacify them. They showed signs of submission, "when suddenly a trooper galloped past, and shouted out that the European troops were coming to disarm them". One of the regiments, the 20th, immediately seized their muskets, but the other, the 11th, still hesitated. But at this juncture the Commanding Officer of the latter, Col. Finnis, who was remonstrating with his men, was fired upon by the men of the other regiment and was immediately killed. The 11th regiment at once joined the other mutineers.

Then followed a scene of indescribable horror and confusion. The sepoys were joined by the convicts released from jail and other *goonda* elements, and they all set out to slay the Euorpeans and burn and plunder their houses. They killed indiscriminately, not sparing even either women or children, and blazing houses all around threw their lurid light upon the scenes of plunder and desecration.

It is generally held by the historians of the Mutiny, that under a pre-arranged plan the sepoys marched towards

Delhi almost immediately after the outbreak had begun. But according to the testimony of Munshi Mohanlal, the mutineers at Mirat had not at first any idea of going to Delhi, and it was only decided after a long deliberation and discussion which fully convinced them that the advantages of such a course were greater than those offered by any other. By an incredible folly, the British commander did not take any measure to pursue the fleeing sepoys who, throughout their march to Delhi during that critical night, were apprehending at every moment that they would be overtaken and overwhelmed by the British troops.

The sepoys of Mirat reached Delhi soon after daybreak on the 11th of May. Those who arrived first went straight to the Red Fort, and requested Bahadur Shah to take the lead in the campaign which they had already begun. After a great deal of hesitation, Bahadur Shah at last agreed, and was proclaimed Emperor of Hindustan. In the meantime, as more and more sepoys from Mirat arrived, the massacre of Europeans—men, women and children—began in full fury. There was no means of resistance, as both the civil and military authorities were taken completely unawares. Then the mutineers proceeded to the cantonment where the local sepoys joined them and cut off their own officers. Deserted by the sepoys, the remaining Europeans, both civil and military, fled from Delhi as best they could, and in less than a week not one of them was left in that city. The success of the mutineers was complete, and they became undisputed masters of the city of Delhi under the nominal authority of the titular Emperor, Bahadur Shah. The strongly fortified walls of the city offered a protection and security which they badly needed at the initial stage before the country as a whole caught the mutinous spirit, and the prestige of the Imperial House of the Timurids served as a symbol for rallying heterogeneous elements round a common banner. So well was all this understood by the British,

that they regarded the recapture of Delhi as the most immediate and important objective of their military campaigns.

2. The Spread of the Mutiny

The news of the mutiny of sepoys at Mirat, followed immediately by the capture of Delhi and the declaration of Bahadur Shah as the Emperor of Hindusthan, created a great sensation all over India. Its immediate reactions could be found in an abortive rising of the sepoys at Firozpur on May 13, and the outbreak of violent disturbances at Muzaffarnagar, followed by the mutiny of sepoys, on the 14th. These two minor incidents apart, the sepoys, the civil population, as well as the *goonda* elements, although highly excited by "the most exaggerated reports of the total collapse of British rule", remained in animated suspense for a week. Evidently, they regarded it as a mere accident or a passing phase, and expected at any moment to hear of the restoration of British authority. But as days passed, and every one of them brought evidence of lethargy and inactivity on the part of the British and stories of their disgrace and discomfiture in Delhi, the signs of reaction began to show themselves. A series of mutinies of sepoys, followed in many cases by the revolt of civil population, convulsed nearly the whole of Northern India. The first to rise was a detachment of sepoys at Aligarh on May 20, 1857. At first they remained not only unmoved, but quite loyal, and even delivered to the authorities a Brahman who had plotted to murder British officers. But when the conspirator was hanged in their presence, a sepoy pointed to the quivering body, and exclaimed to his comrades, "Behold ! a martyr to our religion". The effect was almost instantaneous. The sepoys rose in a body, drove away their officers, and left for Delhi. This was followed by mutinies in the Panjab,—

Naushera, on May 21, and Hoti Mardan during the next two or three days ; but these were easily put down. Far more serious, however, were the series of mutinies in Avadh and North-Western Provinces,—at Etawa and Mainpuri (May 23), Rurki (May 25), Etah (May 27), Hodal, Mathura, and Lakhnau (May 30), Bareilly and Shahjahanpur (May 31), Moradabad and Budaon (June 1), Azamgarh and Sitapur (June 3), Malaon, Mohamdi, Varanasi (Banaras) and Kanpur (Cawnpore) (June 4), Jhansi and Allahabad (June 6), Fyzabad (June 7), Dariabad and Fatepur (June 9), Fategarh (June 18), Hathras (July 1), and several other localities.

In general these mutinies followed the pattern set by Mirat. The sepoys killed the officers and other Europeans on whom they could lay their hands, in many cases sparing neither women nor children. They also released the prisoners from jail, plundered the treasury, burnt Government offices, and then either set out for Delhi, or joined some local chiefs, or roamed at large, seeking to enrich themselves by indiscriminate plunder of both Indians and Europeans. There were, of course, exceptions to their general cruelty towards their late masters. In some cases the British officers were allowed to depart without any harm befalling them, and there are even instances where the sepoys watched over their safety during their flight. It is not necessary to describe in detail the happenings in all the places where the sepoys mutinied, and a brief reference to some important centres must suffice.

A. DELHI.

Although the assumption of leadership by Bahadur Shah gave the mutiny of sepoys in Delhi a general character of popular revolt, it was nothing of the kind. Bahadur Shah had no real heart in the business and only

yielded to the importunities of the sepoys. He had not the capacity to lead the sepoys and was really led by them. The turbulence of the sepoys knew no bounds. They paid scant respect to Bahadur Shah and not unoften humiliated and insulted him. The mass of people in Delhi were also oppressed and plundered by the sepoys, and felt no sympathy for them. So Bahadur Shah carried on secret negotiations with the British, and many citizens of Delhi prayed to God for the return of the English. These statements are quite at variance with the popular conception of the outbreak of 1857, but rest upon unimpeachable testimony.[2]

There are abundant evidences to show that Bahadur Shah had no faith in the cause he was reluctantly forced to serve. His loyalty to the British remained unimpaired. One of his first acts was the despatch of a secret express message to the British authorities at Agra warning them of the mutinous outbreak at Mirat and Delhi.[3] He also protected English fugitives from the wrath of the sepoys and even helped some of them to escape. Although he was adopting measures to restore order in Delhi and set up a machinery to carry on regular civil administration of the city, his heart was not in that task. While the sepoys were fighting *in his name* against the British and dying in hundreds to retain possession of the city, Bahadur Shah was secretly carrying on treasonable intrigue through an agent of Ahsanulla with the British General, offering to admit British troops secretly into the fort if they only agreed to restore him to his old position. Not only Bahadur Shah himself but his favourite queen Zinnat Mahal and the Shahzadas or princes also carried on similar intrigues both with the military authorities and with Greathed, the Political Agent of the Lieutenant-Governor of N.W,P. attached to the Field-force. The Shahzadas sent several messages to Greathed, and having no satisfactory

response from him, approached the British General with "a distinct offer to destroy the Bridge and to enlist the services of the Cavalry, and with their aid to put an end to the Infantry, on condition of favour being shown to the Royal Family." But though the offers of the Shahzadas were not accepted, it appears that there was some secret understanding with Zinnat Mahal.[4]

The second circumstance that proved fatal to the success of the mutiny was the conduct and attitude of the sepoys themselves. The citizens of Delhi looked upon them as an invading army rather than a force fighting for the freedom of the country.

A vivid account of the state of Delhi has been preserved in the diary of Jiwanlal Munshi[5] who was in Delhi at the time. Writing under the date, May 12, i.e. the day after the arrival of the mutineers at Delhi, he writes: "All trade in the city ceased entirely, for every shop that was opened was cleared of its contents."[6] Ordinary business was suspended and shops were closed. The spirit of cruelty and indiscipline which characterized the mutinous sepoys was not confined to their dealings with the British, but was displayed, throughout, even in their treatment of the Indians. The sepoys hunted out the fugitive Europeans and Indian Christians and massacred most of them—men, women and children—,and plundered the houses of, and otherwise cruelly treated, those who had given them shelter. Even respectable Indians were plundered, insulted, and humiliated on mere report of harbouring fugitives or on suspicion that they were in league with the English. The Emperor was powerless to stop the infuriated sepoys. The general condition of the city on May 12 is thus described by Jiwanlal : "From house to house the unwilling King was distracted by cries and petitions—now from the servants of Europeans who had been murdered, now from the shopkeepers whose shops had been plundered, now

from the higher classes whose houses had been broken into—all looked to the King for immediate redress. Appeals were made to him to repress the plunder and rapine now common throughout the city."[7]

On May 15 he writes: "Several respectable men were seized and made to carry burdens to intimidate them and extort money. Such were their sufferings that the better class of city people offered prayers this day for the defeat of the rebels. All valuable property had by this time been buried, and a private police force had been raised by the better class of citizens to protect themselves and their property from plunder and violence."[8]

On May 23 the soldiers plundered the house of Kanheya Lal, of Hyderabad, a severe fight having first taken place between the retainers of Kanheya Lal and the mutineers...Nawab Mir Ahmed Ali Khan, under instructions from the King, issued orders to seize all the bankers and wealthy men of the city—particularly those favourable to the English—and to extort money from them for the pay of the mutineers."[9]

Jiwanlal's diary shows that incidents like these continued almost throughout the period of the siege of Delhi. Thirteen bakers residing at the Kabul Gate were dragged from their houses and killed on 14 June, on mere suspicion of supplying bread to the English. The shop of Jamna Dass was plundered because he sold *attah* at a high price."[10] On July 25, 400 sepoys plundered the houses of Alap Pershad and others, and carried off property to the value of 50,000 Rupees. "As soon as General Mahommed Bakht Khan heard of this he sent off several hundred men to stop the outrage, but these soldiers would not interfere with the plunderers."[11] Gordohan Dass was forced on the same day to pay 2,000 Rupees.[12] Rich bankers were placed in confinement on August 19, and were not released till they paid a heavy amount.[13] Even on September 15, when the fate of Delhi

was sealed, shop-keepers sent a petition that they were being molested and all the shops were closed.[14]

Jiwanlal's account is corroborated by independent testimony. There is on record a petition from Chand Khan and Gulab Khan of the Paharganj area that "the sepoys forcibly took away goods from shops without payment and entered houses of the poor people and took away beds, woods, vessels etc."[15] Bahadur Shah, in course of his evidence during his trial, has given a similar picture of the sepoys. On 27 June, long before Delhi fell, Bahadur Shah wrote a letler to his Commander-in-Chief to the following effect: "Not a day has elapsed, since the arrival of the army and its taking up quarters in the city, that petitions from the townspeople have not been submitted, representing the excesses committed by numerous Infantry Sepoys."[16] This fully vindicates the statements of Jiwanlal, which are also corroborated by several witnesses during the trial of Bahadur Shah, and the records of the British. Besides, as will be shown later, the conduct of the sepoys in other localities, as described by eye-witnesses, is of the same sordid character.

Special reference may be made in this connection to a long statement which Ahsanulla made immediately after the fall of Delhi. It not only refers to plundering and burning inside the city of Delhi, but also cites instances of the sepoys forcibly collecting money in the neighbourhood. He refers to the report of "women killing themselves to be saved from dishonour", and, what is worse still, adds that investigation proved the correctness of this report. He further says "that information reached the King that the quarter inhabited by the Dasas (a caste of Baniya) was being plundered and that many of them had been shot down by the sepoys."[17]

But the domineering attitude of the sepoys was not confined to the people and chiefs of Delhi. They showed but a scant respect to the Emperor himself, even from the

very beginning. On May 12, a number of native regimental officers came and represented the difficulty they experienced in getting rations. "They addressed him with such disrespectful terms as, "I say, you King ! I say, you old fellow !" ("Ari, Badshah ! Ari, Buddha !"). "Listen," cried one, catching him by the hand. "Listen to me"., said another, touching the old King's beard."[18]

Bahadur Shah alleged in his written statement during his trial, that the sepoys paid no respect to him nor acknowledged his authority; they threatened to depose him, kill his queen and other officials, and one day even went to the house of the queen Zinnat Mahal, intending to plunder it, but did not succeed in breaking open the door. Bahadur Shah said he was virtually the prisoner of the sepoys, who had set up a council of their own in which all matters were discussed and line of action decided upon. But there was no order or discipline among them. "Thus", continues Bahadur Shah, "without my knowledge or orders they plundered, not only many individuals, but several entire streets, plundering, robbing, killing and imprisoning all they chose; and forcibly extorting whatever sums of money they thought fit from the merchants and other respectable residents of the city, and appropriating such exactions to their own private purposes...I did whatever they required, otherwise they would immediately have killed me. This is universally known".[19] Indeed things came to such a pass that Bahadur Shah, disgusted of his life, resolved to adopt the life of a religious mendicant and go to Mecca. But the sepoys would not allow him to go.

If contemporary evidence is to be believed, the sepoys, perhaps with honourable exceptions, cared more for money than for their country or countrymen. Main-ud-din, an eye-witness of the events at Delhi,[20] writes : "The rebels were becoming clamorous for pay. They were really laden with money, but they wished to extort as much more as

they could. They threatened to leave the King's service unless paid......"[21] Jiwanlal records in his diary on May 15, i.e. only four days after the Mutiny had broken out in Delhi: "News was received that the mutineers were intimidating the city people, and that 200 troopers, having plundered a quantity of money, had deserted and gone off to their homes, and had in turn been attacked by the Gujars and plundered."[22] The entry in his diary on May 21 is as follows: "The house of Sobha Chand Kaest was this day plundered on the charge that he was in league with the English and supplying them with news. It was reported to the King that the mutineers had possessed themselves of much money and were buying gold mohurs at 32 rupees apiece, and that many mutineers who had left the city with money had been plundered of everything and had returned to the city only with their lives". We are further told that dishonest men took advantage of this craze for gold to defraud the sepoys and then "the soldiers revenged themselves upon the innocent people of the Mohalla."

The sepoys of Mirat quarrelled with those of Delhi over the loot of the latter place. Similarly, outbreaks took place over the rate of pay. "The Meerut sowars accused the Delhi regiments of having enriched themselves by plunder, whereas the Meerut men had by their good behaviour reaped nothing by plunder and robbery. They refused to receive Rs. 9. The foot Sepoys replied that the Meerut men were rebellious and utterly bad. Not only had they been the first to mutiny and kill their officers, whose salt they had eaten—and led others to do likewise—but they were desirous to quarrel and fight with their own countrymen. The Delhi Sepoys said they repented of their great fault—that they had not done their duty and blown them from their guns when they first reached Delhi. Fierce passions were so raised, that at one time there was every probability of a serious encounter. The King's servants rushed in

between the parties, and with great efforts quieted both sides, Mahbub Ali Khan promising the cavalry Rs. 20 pay per mensem"[23]

All these indicate a complete break-down of the administrative machinery set up by Bahadur Shah. Another serious handicap was the lack of mutual confidence. If the Emperor, the chiefs, the aristocracy and the common people had causes of legitimate grievances against the sepoys, the sepoys also had strong suspicions about their loyalty to the cause. They suspected them all as being attached to the English, intriguing with them, harbouring the fugitives, and supplying regular news to the British force besieging Delhi. They brought open charge against the King, his favourite queen, Zinnat Mahal, and his chief adviser, Ahsanullah Khan. On 16 May, "the sepoys went to the Palace in great anger, as they said they had seized a messenger with a letter cursing the mutineers. The sepoys threatened to kill Ahsanullah Khan and Nawab Mahbub Ali Khan, and also threatened to take away Zinnat Mahal Begum Sahiba and keep her as a hostage for the King's loyalty. There was a great uproar in the Palace, the sepoys on the one hand, and the King's household on the other, contending with violent language and harsh vociferations."[24]

That the suspicion of the sepoys was quite justified is proved by the secret intrigues disclosed by British records, as mentioned above. Many of the chiefs who joined the revolt of Delhi were playing a double game like Bahadur Shah. Raja Nahar Singh of Ballabhgarh sent supplies and men to Delhi to support the revolt, but assured the British of his staunch friendship. The Nawab of Jhujhur did the same.[25] Some of the chiefs joined or utilized the revolt to serve their personal ends.

While Delhi was a scene of anarchy and confusion, the British troops from Mirat advanced towards the city.

The sepoys opposed them on the banks of the Hindun river, a few miles from Delhi, but were defeated on two successive days. The sepoys next took up a strong position at Badli-ka-Sarai, about five miles to the north-west of Delhi, but were again defeated ; they then took their position on the Ridge, a long line of hillock which was just outside the walled city of Delhi and skirted along its northern and western side. It was a very strategic position, as it commanded the whole of the walled city, being at one point less than a mile from its Kashmiri Gate. The British troops, though smaller in number, carried the Ridge by assault. Henceforth the Ridge formed the base of their operations. Although the sepoys were reinforced by mutinous troops from new centres of revolt and fought stubbornly, they could not dislodge the British troops from the Ridge. This was primarily due to three reasons. First, the lack of discipline among the sepoys and the chaos and confusion inside the city, mentioned above. Secondly, there were no officers to guide their operations as a combined unit, and no general to formulate a strategic plan of the whole campaign. Thirdly, British reinforcements from the Panjab steadily poured in and the sepoys made no serious and sustained effort to stop the supply. A large force of sepoys made an attempt to intercept the siege-train on its way from the Panjab, but were defeated by only two thousand British troops. The siege-train safely reached Delhi on 4 September, and on the 14th the British force made a full-scale attack on Delhi. On 20 September the city fell and the gates of the Red Fort were blown in. Bahadur Shah surrendered, and after a trial was exiled to Rangoon with his queen Zinnat Mahal. Two sons and a grandson of the King were shot dead by Hodson.

B. KANPUR.

Nana Sahib, the adopted son of Baji Rao II, the last

Peshwa, lived in pomp and splendour at Bithur, a few miles from Kanpur. Although he was sorely aggrieved by the refusal of the British Government to pay him the annual pension of eight lakhs of Rupees enjoyed by his father, he gave no outward sign of discontent or disaffection towards the British. His relations with them were very cordial,—so much so that when the news of the mutiny at Mirat reached Kanpur, the local British authorities asked the aid of Nana to guard the treasury which was five miles away and contained more than hundred thousand pounds in cash. Nana agreed and sent a body of his retainers with two guns. As a measure of safety General Wheeler hastily constructed a place of refuge for the British community, consisting of two one-storied barracks, surrounded by a shallow trench and a mud wall about four feet high. Late at night on June 4 the sepoys, both cavalry and infantry, revolted, with the exception of 53rd. N. I, who remained loyal but were driven away by English guns. Even the detachment of this Regiment, who guarded the treasury and fought for four hours against the mutinous sepoys, was not admitted into the entrenchment.

The mutinous sepoys were joined by Nana's retainers, and seized the treasury after overpowering the loyal sepoys of the 53rd N. I. They rifled it, released the prisoners in jail, and took possession of the magazine. They then marched towards Delhi and reached Kalyanpur, the first stage of the road. But on the very next day,. i. e. 6 June, the sepoys returned to Kanpur with Nana as their leader.

So far, the facts are quite well known. But they raise two intriguing questions. When and why did Nana join the mutinous troops ? What induced them to return to Kanpur after they had proceeded one march on the road to Delhi ?

Some hold the view that Nana had been in secret league with the sepoys long before the Mutiny, and offered

his help to the British only to betray them later and destroy them all the more easily. As noted above, the highest British officials at Kanpur had no such suspicion at the time, and the idea was discredited by some British officials even after the Mutiny was over. This view is not supported by any authentic and positive testimony.

Both Shepherd, writing in 1857, and Mowbray Thomson, writing in 1859, seem to imply that Nana first joined the mutineers when they reached Nawabganj, where the treasury was situated, and to which place they proceeded directly from the cantonment. None of them could have any personal knowledge of the incident, and both relied on hearsay reports, as Shepherd plainly admits. Not much reliance can therefore be placed on the hearsay evidence of Mowbray Thomson and Shepherd. At the same time it has to be admitted that the reasons which induced Nana to join the mutineers cannot be determined with absolute certainty. We have no evidence of any person, who may be reasonably credited with a knowledge of the truth, save and except Tantia Topi, whose statement on this point runs as follows : "The three regiments of infantry and the Second Light Cavalry surrounded us, and imprisoned the Nana and myself in the Treasury and plundered the Magazine and the Treasury of everything they contained, leaving nothing in either. Of the treasure, the sepoys made over two lacs and eleven thousand rupees to the Nana, keeping their own sentries over it. The Nana was also under charge of these sentries, and the sepoys who were with us joined the rebels. After this the whole army marched from that place, and the rebels took the Nana Sahib and myself and all our attendants along with them, and said, 'Come along to Delhi'. Having gone three coss from Cawnpore, the Nana said that as the day was far spent, it was far better to halt there then, and to march on the following day. They agreed to this, and halted. In the morning the whole army

told him (Nana) to go with them towards Delhi. The Nana refused, and the army then said, 'Come with us to Cawnpore and fight there'. The Nana objected to this, but they would not attend to him. And so, taking him with them as a prisoner they went towards Cawnpore, and fighting commenced there."[26] The subsequent portion of this account suggests that the position of Nana *vis a vis* the sepoys was not unlike that of Bahadur Shah, and though he was the nominal leader of the sepoys, they did not obey his orders.

As Tantia was a devoted follower of Nana, and himself a rebel against the British, his statement cannot, of course, be taken as unvarnished truth. At the same time it is to be remembered that the statement was a sort of dying declaration, made by Tantia at a time when he had nothing to hope or fear from the British. He and Nana had committed acts which could never be forgiven or forgotten, and he was in the hands of those whose recent conduct proved beyond doubt that they never forgave nor forgot. So he could not possibly have any motive for hiding his own or Nana's guilt ; on the other hand, there was every temptation to create the impression that they fought a patriotic or national war against the hated English which would enshrine their memory in the hearts of their countrymen. So, if Nana had taken the lead in the mutiny of sepoys, one would normally expect Tantia to have emphasized, rather than denied, the fact.

It is interesting to note that Tantia's version is supported by Nana's own statement in a petition, dated 20 April, 1859, addressed to Her Majesty the Queen. He says that he "joined the rebels from helplessness" and elucidates it as follows :

"My soldiers were not of my own country, and I previously urged that so insignificant (*gureeb*) a person as myself could render no material aid to the British. But

General Wheeler would not listen to me and invited me into the entrenchments. When your army mutinied and proceeded to take possession of the Treasury my soldiers joined them. Upon this I reflected that if I went into the Entrenchments my soldiers would kill my family, and that the British would punish me for the rebellion of my soldiers. It was therefore better for me to die. My ryots were urgent and I was obliged to join the soldiers"[27]

Here, again, one should not ordinarily put much faith in the statement of Nana made in a petition for mercy. There are, however, two considerations which might possibly lead one to think otherwise. In the first place, it agrees with the statement of Tantia Topi, quoted above, made only a few days earlier at a very distant place, after the two had been separated for a pretty long time. Secondly, in course of the correspondence that followed the petition referred to above, Nana repeatedly declared that he would fight till the last and did not fear to die as "life must be given up some day". This makes it highly improbable that he would deny his active participation in the mutiny, if it were true, merely out of fear. Besides, he must have known very well that the British were sure of unearthing evidence in favour of it, if it were a fact, after his surrender.

Whatever might have been the motive of Nana, he certainly acted henceforth as the leader of the mutinous sepoys. He himself communicated his new role in a letter to Wheeler, warning him to expect an attack by him at the head of the sepoys.

As noted above, the British residents at Kanpur had taken refuge in a hastily constructed entrenchment. Into this miserable defence were huddled up 900 souls, comprising about four hundred English fighting men, of whom more than seventy were invalids, and about 376 women

and children ; the rest were Indians, including 20 sepoys, 44 regimental musicians and 50 servants. They had to defend themselves against three thousand armed sepoys, well armed and supplied with all munitions of war. [27a]

But in spite of the disparity of numbers and the weakness of the defence, the defenders held out till June 25. At first the sepoys merely bombarded the entrenchment, and day and night hurled a continuous shower of shot and shell and bullets. Once, on June 12, they made an assault, but turned back after a few sepoys had been killed by the fire of the enemy. On June 23, they made another assault, but were "hurled back as before, in ignominious rout". On June 25, "a woman came into the entrenchment, with a letter from the Nana, offering a safe passage to Allahabad to every member of the garrison who had not been connected with the acts of Lord Dalhousie. The offer was accepted and a regular treaty was signed on the 26th". It was provided that the entrenchment should be evacuated and boats with food supply would be provided by Nana for taking the besieged to Allahabad.[28] In pursuance of this agreement, on the morning of June 27, the besieged Englishmen got into forty boats kept ready for them at the *Sati Chaura ghat*. As soon as the last man had stepped into the boat, a bugle was heard and all the native boatmen jumped over and waded to the shore. Some Englishmen *immediately* fired upon them. Then the very sepoys who escorted the last batch of Englishmen to the *ghat* opened fire with their carbines. The fire was returned by the Englishmen and the sepoys retired. Shortly the troops and guns posted by the riverside came into action. One boat caught fire and the conflagration spread to the neighbouring boats, all of which had thatched roofs. Many, particularly the sick and the wounded, were burnt to death, while the rest, including some women with children in their arms, took to the river. Many of these were killed,

and a number of them were made captives. A single boat escaped, but it was later seized, and only four of its occupants fled with their lives to tell the tale of this ghastly affair.[29] It was a terrible tragedy, and it has been suggested that the whole thing was the result of a pre-arranged conspiracy. There is, however, no satisfactory evidence in support of this charge.

Nana was not present on the riverside. Though, as the leader of the sepoys, he must bear full responsibility for their action, there is nothing to indicate that he had deliberately plotted to murder the Englishmen. The whole tenor of his conduct goes against such an assumption.

Henceforth Nana assumed the role of a conquering hero. On June 30, he was proclaimed Peshwa amid the usual pomp and ceremonies of olden times. He spent his time in his palace at Bithur with feasts and revels, and issued grandiloquent proclamations "from Painted Garden of the Peshwa." These contained despicable lies and vainglorious boasts which are no less amusing than contemptible."[30]

C. JHANSI

The mutiny rapidly spread to the south of the Yamuna river. The first to be affected were the sepoys at Jhansi. There were two forts at Jhansi, a small one in the cantonment, and another outside it. On June 5, 1857, some sepoys, peacefully took possession of the small fort under some pretext. On June 6, there was a mutiny of the whole force according to a pre-concerted plan, in which some persons, outside the army, also seem to have taken part. Some officers were killed or injured, and the rest of the Europeans took shelter in the other fort, also outside the town. On June 8, the mutineers promised personal security to all the Europeans provided they left the fort without taking any arms. But as soon as they came out of the fort, all of them—men, women, children—were taken to a garden and massacred in cold

blood. According to one account, 57 men, 12 women, and 23 children perished in this way, but another account sets the total number as 72. The mutineers proceeded to Delhi three days after this nefarious deed.

There is nothing to indicate that any leading part in this mutiny was taken by Rani Lakshmibai of Jhansi, the widowed queen of Gangadhar Rao, the last ruler of Jhansi, and a victim of Dalhousie's Doctrine of Lapse.[31] The Rani would have been more or less than a human being if she had not cherished strong sentiment against the British Government for setting aside the adoption made by her husband and annexing Jhansi. This very natural presumption of Rani's feeling of antipathy towards the British has induced many persons to believe that the Rani had instigated the sepoys to mutiny, or at least actively helped the mutineers, by way of taking revenge against the British. There is nothing to support this view. On the other hand, the Rani was no friend of the sepoys. She was forced by the mutineers to help them with money, guns and elephants. The Rani herself says that she was threatened by the sepoys that if she at all hesitated to comply with their requests, they would blow up her palace with guns; and she was, therefore, "obliged to consent to all their demands to pay large sums to save life and honour."

The Rani's statement that she acted under duress is also proved by independent evidence, including early official reports about the mutiny at Jhansi. It is further supported by Rani's conduct and attitude after that mutiny. Immediately after the mutinous sepoys had left Jhansi for Delhi, she put herself in communication with the British authorities, sending a full report of the mutiny and condemning the conduct of the sepoys, particularly the massacre of the Europeans. The Commissioner of the Sagar Division, to whom she wrote as Jhansi lay in his jurisdiction, believed in her innocence and pro-British attitude. As all the British officials at Jhansi

were killed, and the whole region became a scene of rapine and plunder, he appointed the Rani to rule the territory on behalf of the British till such time as they could re-establish a regular system of administration, and he issued a formal proclamation to that effect. The Rani accepted the position and carried on the administration of Jhansi in the name, or on behalf, of the British Government.

The Government of India, however, suspected her from the very beginning as an accomplice of the mutinous sepoys, both in respect of the mutiny and the massacre that followed. They accordingly issued instructions to collect evidence of her guilt. The Rani made repeated attempts to disabuse their minds, but failed. No heed was paid either to her protestations of innocence or to her unequivocal declaration of loyalty to the British. When she was at last convinced that the British were determined to bring her to trial for the massacre of the Europeans—but not till then—she decided to defend her honour by armed resistance to the British. She was faced by two alternatives, namely death by a hangman's rope or a heroic death in the battlefield. She chose the more honourable course.

D. OTHER CENTRES OF MUTINY

The news of the mutiny at Jhansi led to that of the sepoys at Nowgong, who formed detachments of the Jhansi regiment, on June 10. On June 14, the sepoys in the Gwalior Contingent, recruited from Avadh, mutinied, and killed as many Europeans as they could, but allowed the women to go unharmed. For a long time this formidable body of well-equipped sepoys, though mutinous, had remained idle at Gwalior in the vain hope of being led by Sindhia against the British, though they might have played a dominant, if not decisive, part in the mutiny of Central India, Delhi, Agra or Kanpur. When they at last actually mutinied, it was too late for them to play any effective part.

At Indore the troops belonging to Holkar mutinied on July 1, and three hundred Bhils and two Companies of the Bhopal Cavalry, which formed part of the British garrison, were brought to oppose them. But ere long they cast in their lot with the mutineers. In the words of Ball, "by one impulse the whole of the troops that had assisted in the defence……deserted to the mutineers, threatening at the same time to shoot the officers if they ventured to interfere with them." Some Europeans were murdered, treasury was looted, and public property destroyed. The mutiny at Indore was followed by that at Mhow. Mutiny also broke out in several places in the Sagar and Narmada territories towards the end of June.

At Dhar, the Arab and Afghan mercenaries in the service of the Raja rose against the British. A number of Sindhia's troops had seized Mandasor and were shortly joined by a part of the mutinous cavalry of the Gwalior Contingent and other insurgent hordes, including Afghan and Mekrani Muslims. The leader of this motley body was Shahzada Firuz Shah, a direct descendant of the Mughul Emperors of Delhi, who had already declared a *jihad* against the British. He seized the town of Mandasor and formally installed himself as king. He "addressed circular letters to the neighbouring Princes of Pratabgarh, Jawra, Sitamau, Ratlam, and the Chief of Salumbar, calling upon them to acknowledge the new power, but none responded except Abdul Sattar Khan, a scion of the ruling house of Jawra." By September the number of his followers increased to about eighteen thousand, and he sent troops against Nimach in November. They defeated a contingent force at Jiran and laid siege to the fort, but had soon to face the British troops under Henry Marion Durand, the Agent of the Governor-General in Central India, who had already suppressed the mutiny at Dhar. Firuz Shah's troops were defeated at Garoria and he himself fled from Mandasor

which was retaken by the British. But his career did not end here, and he occasionally emerged as a leader of the mutiny at far distant places, as will be described later.

Rajasthan, though generally unaffected, had its share, and the troops at two important military stations, namely, Nasirabad and Nimach, mutinied respectively on May 28 and June 3. They followed the usual pattern and, after having plundered the cantonment and burnt many bungalows, proceeded towards Delhi. The people remained quiet, and the Rajput chiefs, particularly the Raja of Jodhpur, helped the British. The only exception was Thakur Kusal Singh, the Chief of Ahua, or Awah, who had some specific grievances against the British. He joined the mutineers and defeated not only the troops of Jodhpur but also a British force under Captain Mason. But in spite of heroic resistance he ultimately surrendered. There was also a mutiny at Kotah where the rebel troops took possession of the city and kept the Maharaja a prisoner. But after six months they were defeated by the British forces.

Bengal was practically unaffected by the Mutiny with the exception of two sporadic outbursts at Dacca and Chittagong. On November 18, the 34th N.I. at Chittagong mutinied and followed the usual procedure. They found no sympathy among the people and, being defeated by the loyal native regiment, marched northwards through Sylhet and Cachar. Being defeated again, they turned towards the east and were joined by some discontented chiefs of Manipur living in Cachar. But they could not enter Manipur, whose ruler, at the request of the British, sent his troops and captured a number of them. These were handed over to the British and the rest betook themselves to the neighbouring hills and jungles. On November 22, the troops at Dacca refused to be disarmed and mutinied, but being defeated, fled towards Jalpaiguri. There were some desultory outbreaks in the Bhagalpur Division, and two cavalry

detachments at Madariganj and Jalpaiguri mutinied. But these as well as the mutineers from Dacca were easily dispersed and forced to seek refuge in Nepal.

In Bihar, the most important military station was Danapur (Dinapore), near Patna, which was an important strategic position commanding the land and river-routes from Calcutta to Upper India. The sepoys were loyal during the month of June and the better part of July. Nevertheless, suspicion grew and steps were taken to disarm the sepoys. They broke into mutiny and proceeded to Arrah where they were joined by Kunwar Singh, the Rajput *Zamindar* of Jagdishpur near Arrah. There are good grounds to believe that, like Nana, he was not inimical to the English but his hands were forced by the mutinous sepoys. His career as their leader will be described in the next section.

Mutiny also broke out in several other places in Bihar. In August some sepoys mutinied, came to Noada, destroyed the public buildings (September 8), and then marched towards Gaya. Rattray, with a small force of Sikhs and Europeans, advanced from Gaya to meet them, but the sepoys inflicted heavy loss upon this force and entered Gaya. There they liberated the prisoners and attacked the fortified house were the European residents had taken refuge, but failed to take it. The sepoys also mutinied at Deogarh, but were dispersed after a severe contest. The Ramgarh battalions mutinied at Hazaribagh, and their comrades at Sambalpur followed their example.

The mutinious spirit was not altogether absent in the Deccan, but there was no actual outbreak of mutiny except at Kolhapur. There the sepoys mutinied on July 31, 1857, and after plundering the treasury marched towards the town. As the gates were closed, most of them returned to their lines, while a few, about forty in number, entrenched themselves into a small outwork adjoining the town. Reinforcement of European troops having arrived from Bombay, the

sepoys in the outwork were overpowered. On the arrival of further reinforcements, the native regiment was disarmed.

Attempts at mutiny failed at Ahmadabad in Gujarat and Hyderabad in Sindh. A mutiny actually broke out at Karachi, but was easily put down.

There were no serious troubles in the Panjab, for as soon as the news of Mirat and Delhi reached Lahore, the authorities sent movable columns to disarm the sepoys at several cantonments, and there was no resistance except at a few places. The mutiny in the Panjab, where it occurred, was, without exception, the result of attempt to disarm the sepoys.

II. THE REVOLT OF THE PEOPLE.

1. The Immediate Cause and General Nature.

The success of the mutineers at various places, and the massacre or flight of the local British officials, in particular their abandonment of the city of Delhi into the hands of the mutineers, led the people all over Rohilkhand and Avadh to believe that the British *raj* had ceased to exist. No visible symbol was left of its authority in many localities, and there was almost a complete political vacuum and lack of any kind of authority. In all ages and countries such a situation affords the best opportunity for popular outbreaks, varying in nature according to the circumstances and temperament of the different types of people.

As already mentioned above, all classes of people in India were thoroughly discontented and disaffected against the British. It is, therefore, quite natural, and no extraordinary phenomenon, that there should be a general rising of the people against the hated *feringhees* wherever the success of the Mutiny had destroyed their power and authority. Motives of personal gain undoubtedly operated to a large extent among all classes, and were the sole motive of many, notably the *goonda* elements and those professional classes

who were accustomed to live by plunder, such as the Gujars, Ranghars, Jats etc. Another class, which was powerfully influenced by motives of self-interest and contributed largely to the origin and prolongation of the popular revolt, was the one connected with land. This was specially the case in Avadh, where a large number of *Zamindars*, known as *Talukdars*, had lost their lands which were sold at auction. "The cultivators and poor classes still continued to look upon them with greater regard than the purchaser to auction, and the ex-*Zamindar* and his family were still the most influential residents of the village. The auction purchaser, on the other hand, was generally a resident of the city, and never visited his village, except for the hateful purpose of collecting his rents, or enforcing his decrees. The people, therefore, naturally sided with the *Zamindars* to whom the outbreaks seemed a grand opportunity of recovering their position. They first set to work to destroy and plunder everything European, and took forcible possession of their old estates."[32]

Personal gain or satisfaction of personal ambition which impelled the people to rebel took many forms. The leaders and grandees thought of recovering the territories, honours and privileges they had lost, gaining new lands and wealth within easy reach, or paying off old scores against an enemy,—a natural instinct from which they were hitherto restrained by the rule of law established by the British. Some were eager to seize this golden opportunity of making amends for the grievous injuries they had suffered in the hands of the British. Less important persons sought to remove the sources of their misery and humiliation by (i) destroying the bonds for loans or title-deeds of land deposited with the *baniyas* at the time of borrowing money at high rate of interest which threatened to ruin them; and (2) killing the oppressive landlords or indigo-planters who had hitherto treated them as serfs.

They welcomed, if not initiated, the revolt, because it did away with the inconvenient necessity of paying taxes to the Government and rent to the landowners, ushered in freedom from all vexatious restraints imposed by the Government, and above all, meant the end of the various sources of discontent which the British rule had introduced in the country.

In many cases the outbreak was merely a continuation or revival of the acts of resistance discussed in Chapter VI, and many revolts were inspired by the same or similar causes.

It is possible that less selfish motives were also at work. The general discontent and disaffection against the British made some persons anxious to put an end to their rule, and they seized the god-sent opportunity to drive away the hated *feringhees*, now that they had lost the only prop of their rule in India, namely, the allegiance of the sepoys.

Some Muslim leaders and *Maulavis* were fired by the ambition of restoring Muslim rule in India. A few leaders, both Hindu and Muslim, might have been urged by the noble instinct of achieving freedom from foreign yoke, although their vision did not extend to the whole of India, and was limited to the narrow horizon of their own locality.

While these and other causes produced local revolts over an extensive area, it is significant to note that there was no common end, common plan, or common organization. In most cases the outbreaks were purely local affairs, and attempts to put in a joint resistance to the British were few and far between.

Another significant feature was that though the beginnings of the revolt were marked by timidity and hesitation, after the people had made their choice they often resisted the mighty British force with valour and heroism, sometimes

to a remarkable degree. Once they had crossed the Rubicon, many rebels never looked back.

There can be no reasonable doubt, therefore, that the various factors mentioned above were mainly responsible for the general "upsurge of the people", and it was thus that without any preconcerted plan and organization, the mutiny merged itself into a general rising of the civil population of all types and classes. The civil population was undoubtedly spurred on to revolt because of the grave discontent and resentment which different classes of people nursed in their heart for different reasons, but if the Mutiny had not extinguished the local authority, the civil population would not have dared to revolt. The people's revolt was the effect, and not the cause, of the Mutiny.

The outbreak at Muzaffarnagar,[33] on May 14, the earliest instance of civil revolt, was precipitated by the action of Mr. Berford, the Magistrate and Collector. He was unnerved by the news of the mutiny at Mirat, followed by the exaggerated and false account of the imminent approach of mutinous troops towards Muzaffarnagar. He at once ordered the Public offices to be closed for three days. On the 12th evening he heard that the convicts in jail would rise that night, and he immediately fled through the jungle to a village where he spent the night, during which nothing occurred in Muzaffarnagar. On the 13th some officers' bungalows were burnt by the villagers, and it was decided by Berford to remove the treasure to the Tehseel on the 14th. The Treasury-guard refused to do it and broke open the treasure chests. They took away as much as they could carry and left. A number of people who were near by plundered the rest. As there were no regular sepoys, the Magistrate drew off the jail-guard for his own defence, and released the prisoners. As Mr. Grant, at that time the Joint Magistrate and Deputy Collector, says in his report, the people were

convinced by this act that the Government rule had ceased to exist. They saw that they could with impunity commit any excesses, that nobody interfered or meddled with them, and that even the incendiaries captured on the previous day were set free with others. The Civil, Criminal, and Collectorate *dufturs* were burnt by the people that night (May 14). Violent crimes of all kinds were daily, almost hourly, committed throughout the district, not secretly or by night, but openly and at noonday, and the *baniyas* and *mahajans* were victims in the majority of cases.

The same scene was witnessed at Saharanpur. "The news of the outbreak at Meerut reached Saharanpur on the 12th of May.........The Goojurs and Ranghurs at once commenced plundering ; and when the disturbances began in the Moozuffurnagar district, disquiet spread through that of Saharanpur. At first bankers were robbed, or had to pay for exemption from plunder ; money-lenders and traders were forced to give up their books of accounts, and vouchers for debts ; old feuds were renewed ; the first outbreaks were to pay off old feuds, or to clear off accounts or for the sake of plunder. All the government records with the *mahajan's* accounts, bonds, etc., were torn up and scattered over the neighbouring gardens.........."

As in Muzaffarnagar, so in Saharanpur, the notorious lawless elements broke out into an orgy of riots at the news of Mirat, even before the local sepoys had actually mutinied.

According to the official narrative, on which the above account is based, the disturbances in the commencement were less directed against the Government than against particular classes. Ancient tribe or caste feuds were renewed, and the *Zamindars* and villagers took advantage of the general anarchy to obtain from the *mahajans* and the *baniyas* their books of business and bond-debts, etc. When the fall of Delhi ceased to be looked upon as imminent the

agricultural communities began to turn their eyes towards the local treasuries and did not scruple to oppose themselves to Government officers and troops.

But the character of the risings continued to be the same after the sepoys had mutinied, killed their officers and released the prisoners in jail. In two respects alone a difference was noticeable. In the first place, the risings became widespread, particularly in Avadh and Rohilkhand, and secondly, local leaders, big or small, established their own *raj*, now that the British officers had vanished and the British *raj* was believed to have come to an end. This has been regarded by many writers as "a vast upsurge of the people", and by not a few as 'war of Indian independence'. One of these writers has described as follows the situation at Saharanpur, with a population of about forty thousand, after the sepoys had joined the Gujars and Ranghars, who had commenced their depredations even before the sepoys mutinied. "All throughout this period the turbulent elements robbed the bankers and money-lenders, extorted blackmail from them and sacked the police stations and tahsils. Umrao Singh, the headman of the village of Manakpur in Mangalaur tahsil, declared himself a raja, levied money, though he failed in the long run. The tahsil and the thana of Nakur was completely gutted. The magistrate, Robertson, proceeded to punish the refractory villages on 20 June, but the country around rose up to effect the release of the prisoners. It was a war of the villagers—parties with the beat of *dhols* assembled on 22 June, and showed a grit and determination in the fight. Buddhakheri was a strong centre of Gujar disaffection where one Fatua proclaimed himself king of the Gujars."[34] This being the usual pattern of the 'popular upsurge' and 'war of independence, obviously these expressions have to be understood in a special sense.

The same story was repeated in other places. In

Bulandshahr "mixed crowds of rebel forces, Gujars, villagers and townsmen took part in wanton destruction of civil and military establishments. Offices were gutted, records destroyed, and former proprietors ousted. Many other excesses were committed culminating in the temporary disappearance of the British rule by 29 May"[35]

A scrutiny of these accounts reveals several prominent elements in these early risings. The first was the notorious *goonda* elements of the locality who never miss any opportunity of troubles or disturbances to carry on their nefarious activities. In a way the sepoys encouraged these by opening the jails which became a regular feature of the mutiny. The ex-convicts and *goondas* were naturally joined by other elements of similar nature, and there are some grounds to suppose that plunder and massacre were largely the work of these people who formed the scum of the population.

Next to the local *goonda* elements, we notice the activities of various marauding tribes, notorious for rapine, plunder and massacre, which formed their principal occupation and the only means of livelihood. The above account of the Gujars and Ranghars at Saharanpur gives us a fair idea of the quick reaction of the Mutiny upon these classes of peoples.

It was not long before other classes seized the opportunity to exploit the situation to their advantage. The village *Zamindars* and villagers took advantage of the general anarchy to obtain from *Mahajans* and *Baniyas* their books of business and bond-debts etc.

The prominent chiefs of various localities could not be expected to sit idle. They took advantage of the general turmoil to regain what they had lost, or to gain new territories and privileges, and, not unoften, also to settle old scores with enemies. As mentioned above, the disturbances, at least at the beginning, were less directed

against Government than against particular people and classes. A contemporary writer has given a very vivid description of the state of anarchy and confusion that prevailed "in the open country......from Delhi over the whole of the cis-Sutlej States". After referring to the plundering raids and other atrocities perpetrated by the Gujars and other predatory tribes impartially on all classes of people—Europeans and Indians, civil or military—he refers to the activities of the normally peaceful folk as follows: "Villagers fought with one another about boundary questions decided half a century ago. Hundreds of cattle changed hands ; murders and robberies were committed unpunished in the open day".[36]

2. PRINCIPAL CENTRES OF CIVIL REVOLT

A. North-West Provinces

The revolutionary outbreaks of civil population took place over such an extensive area in the region now known as Uttar Pradesh, that it is not possible to refer, even briefly, to all the affected localities. Nevertheless, as the 'popular upsurge' has been construed as a struggle for national independence, it is necessary to form an accurate idea of its nature. This can best be done by referring to the incidents that took place in a few selected localities.

Reference has already been made to the outbreaks at Muzaffarnagar, Saharanpur, and Bulandshahr. The chief centre of revolt in Rohilkhand was Bareilly where the sepoys suddenly and unexpectedly rose on 31 May, and the British officers fled for their lives. The Cavalry regiment was loyal, and galloped to the help of the British officers, but the latter mistook them as pursuers, and rode forward as best they could without looking back to see the friendly signal. The Cavalry regiment thereupon joined the mutineers.

Khan Bahadur Khan was the natural leader of the Rohillas. His grandfather, Hafiz Rahmat Khan, the ruler

of Rohilkhand, was defeated and killed by the Nawab of Avadh with the help of British troops lent by Warren Hastings. But though the Nawab annexed Rohilkhand, he had to cede it to the British. As the head of the ruling family, Khan Bahadur Khan got a monthly stipend of one hundred Rupees from the British Government, and he also enjoyed pension as a judicial officer in the British service.

Khan Bahadur Khan was friendly to the British, and on May 30 warned the Commissioner of the impending mutiny. The latter writes in his report : "He shook hands with me and his last words were significant, *apne jan buchao* or look out for your life".[37] Yet when the successful mutiny of the troops heralded the end of the British rule, Khan Bahadur Khan assumed the administration as Viceroy on behalf of the Emperor of Delhi.

He began his reign by ordering the execution of all the English. He appointed district officers of different grades, began to collect revenue, and set up a regular system of administration broad-based on the sympathy and support of the Hindus and Muslims. He sent *nazar* and presents to the Emperor at Delhi and received the firman of investiture as Viceroy. He appointed Hindus to important posts, and many chiefs, both Hindu and Muslim, acknowledged him as Lord. But the communal jealousy was too deep to be uprooted, and ruined the chances of a good administration. Sobha Ram, the head of the Revenue Department, was not liked by the Muslims, and one day, during his absence, a Muslim crowd forcibly entered into his house on the plea of searching for hidden Englishmen and plundered it. Mir Alam Khan, a relative of Khan Bahadur Khan, attacked the house of a respectable Hindu, named Baldeo Gir Gosain, and threatened him and his wife with violence. Gosain killed him in self-defence. But though Gosain was tried for this murder and acquitted, he was killed by Mir Alam's brother who got off scotfree. Hindu

officers were despoiled. Businessmen were heavily taxed and payment was enforced by severe measures. Not only some of them but even high officials of the newly established Government were secretly helping the British. In Budaon Thakur Harlal of Bakshiena collected his clan and declared himself independent of Delhi and his Nazim, Khan Bahadur.

We possesss an account of the mutiny at Bareilly written by Durgadas Bandyopadhyaya[38], a Bengali gentleman in the employ of the British army. He was present there and had ample opportunities of seeing things for himself and securing information from reliable sources. Here we find almost an exact replica of the tales of woe and misery suffered by the people at the hands of the sepoys as witnessed at Delhi by Mushi Jiwanlal and Main-ud-din. Khan Bahadur Khan, the nominal ruler of Bareilly, was in a helpless condition like Bahadur Shah, and Bakht Khan wielded the real power. There was no discipline among the sepoys, who were engaged in indiscriminately looting the shops and plundering the rich and poor alike. As in Delhi, many sepoys amassed a rich booty and returned home. Most cruel tortures were applied to extort money from the people. The Hindus and Muslims were forced to reveal their hidden treasure by the threat of being forced to take respectively the flesh of cows and pigs. Men were made to sit on boiling cauldrons with the same object. Plunder, theft, robbery and rape were the order of the day. A circumstantial narrative of the indignities suffered by a rich woman of the town, named Panna, in the hands of the sepoys, makes most painful reading. The demon of communalism also raised its head. The Muslims spat over the Hindus and openly defiled their houses by sprinkling them with cow's blood and placing cow's bones within the compounds. Concrete instances are given where Hindu sepoys came into clash with the Muslim hooligans engaged in defiling Hindu houses, and

a communal riot ensued. The Hindus, oppressed by the Muslims, were depressed at the success of the mutiny, and daily offered prayers to God for the return of the English. Even many Muslims wanted the English to return. Large number of persons were recruited as mercenaries and joined the mutineers on payment of Rs. 5, 6, or 7 per month. The mutineers were very hard on the Bengali residents of Bareilly. Many of them were whipped, and seven were condemned to death, merely on suspicion and without any regular charge being framed against them.

Another important centre of revolt was Farrukhabad. The cantonment at Fategarh was about six miles from this place. The sepoys of the 10th N. I. mutinied on June 18 and formally placed the Nawab of Furrukhabad on the *musnud* (throne) under a royal salute, and tendered their allegiance to him. They had seized the treasure, but when the new Government demanded it, they resolutely refused to surrender a rupee. Even when the mutinous sepoys of 41st N. I. from the neighbouring district of Sitapur asked for a share of it, they refused to divide the spoil. Many sepoys of the 10th N. I. went home with their share of the loot and then there ensued a fight between the two groups—the remnant of the 10th and 41st N. I.—in which several sepoys on both sides were killed. At last, the survivors joined together in attacking the fort which fell and many British were killed, or drowned in course of their flight. The Nawab, Tuffuzzal Husain Khan, then set up an administrtion with the help of the old native officials. He made an attempt to conciliate the Hindus who formed the majority of the Sitapur regiment, but communal riots broke out here and there.

The outbreak at Bijnor possesses some features of special interest. It was not a military station and offers an undiluted picture of the revolt of the civil population. On May 19, the news of Mirat let loose not only all the lawless elements but even more respectable classes, The plunder of

tahsils, burning, and other usual excesses were committed by the Gujars, Banjars, Mewatis, Jats, Chauhans, and escaped prisoners over an extensive area. Even more respectable classes joined in the fray, the lead being taken by Mahmud Khan, Nawab of Nazibabad, who arrived at the place with a band of sturdy Pathans to take possession of the rich treasures which were kept at the station. The Magistrate, through the good offices of a loyal Government servant, who afterwards became famous as Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, entered into an agreement with the Nawab by which the latter was placed in charge of the district for a period of ten days, during which, it was expected, Delhi would fall and the Magistrate would be able to return in full force. But as Delhi did not fall, and the Magistrate did not return, the Nawab proclaimed himself ruler of the district under the King of Delhi. After setting himself firmly in his authority, the Nawab began to oppress the Hindu chiefs. These, however, combined and drove him from Bijnor. Then followed a bitter and prolonged fight between the Hindus and the Muslims in which the ultimate victory rested with the latter. This was celebrated by a wanton massacre of unoffending Hindus. But soon a dispute arose between the Muslim leaders themselves and the power was shared by three of them. They held it till April, 1858. During this period freebooters from neighbouring districts joined the party, and burned and plundered the neighbouring localities, including the two sacred sites of the Hindus, viz., Haridvar and Kanakhal.

Bareilly, Farrukhabad, and Bijnor furnish typical pictures of the numerous tiny kingdoms that were established all over Rohilkhand as a result of the withdrawal of the British. Though some of them nominally acknowledged the authority of Delhi, they were all independent for all practical purposes.

In some places, as in Moradabad, these tiny kingdoms, left by the British as parting gifts, proved a veritable apple of discord between rival candidates chosen by different sections of the mutinous sepoys. But the Nawab of Rampur was loyal to the British and really held the district for them in spite of the revolt of a number of Muslim leaders. The communal bitterness, as usual, marked the outbreak.

In Shahjahanpur the mutinous sepoys killed a number of Europeans, two of them at the church. The survivors found a temporary refuge with the *Zamindar* of Pawain, but while proceeding towards Aurangabad were cruelly massacred. While the Maulavis and Ghazis were dominating the city, "the villagers broke out into rebellion ; tahsils were plundered, records were destroyed and police stations sacked. On June 1, a procession proclaiming the overthrow of the British rule was led by Hamid Hasan Khan and Nizamali Khan. The rule of the Rohillas under Khan Bahadur Khan was announced with Qadirali Khan and Ghulam Hussain Khan as local chiefs. But the mutual jealousies of the Mahomedan rulers and the resistance to their exactions by the Rajput chiefs who were killed in large numbers by Mardanali Khan in a fierce encounter, led to an indifferent situation."

The 'popular upsurge' at Budaun is instructive in so far as it shows very clearly how different classes used the movement to their own advantage. Inhabitants of some villages commenced plundering travellers, while those of others plundered the boats laden with grain belonging to corn-dealers, which were moored on the *ghats* of the Ganga. The Aheers of Nundpoor, Lawur and others banded together and murdered Heera Singh and Kulloo Singh, *Zamindars* of Putheria ; they wounded Gopal Singh, the brother of the above, and plundered their property. The official Narrative contains many gruesome details on the basis of which Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri, who views the outbreak of 1857 as

a national war of independence, describes the progress of popular agitation at Budaun in the following words :

"Though internal dissensions between the different communities weakened the basis of the movement, the popular fury was there to feed sedition. Blackmail was freely levied from all the baniyas and mahajans, and valuable indigo factories were gutted and even the iron boilers were melted down for shot and records were burnt extensively. While the masses had done everything to efface all traces of British rule, the talukdars took the opportunity of expelling the auction purchasers, and resumed possession of their hereditary estates."[39] Many Government servants, mostly Hindus, took service under the rebels and more than fifty chiefs carried on rapine and violence all over the district.

In Aligarh, "the Chohans of the Pergunnah, intent on revenge, called in the Jats to their help, attacked Khyr, and plundered and destroyed nearly all the government buildings, as well as the houses of *bunyahs* and *mahajans*. In July a regular government was set up by the rebels under Nusseemoollah. The old Rajput and Jat feuds raged strongly in the western parts of this district, and towards Saidabad, in the Muttra district. The feeling of animosity between Hindoos and Mahomedans was also generally bitter in the towns of this district. Of the European-owned indigo factories, a very large one was plundered and burnt by the villagers, and three others were plundered by mutineer troops. The records of the Sudder cutcherry, and those of four of eight tehseels, were destroyed. As elsewhere, the people plundered one another freely, and two towns of importance were plundered. Coel was plundered by Mewatees, etc. of the town, by passing rebel troops, by Nuseemoollah during his 11 days' reign, and by the British troops."

In Mathura the news of the Mutiny had spread with a great rapidity, and the whole country had risen almost

instantaneously. 'The *seths* Radha Kishen and Gobind Das raised a large body of men at their own expenses, and by their influence kept the other inhabitants quiet. They also lent Captain Nixon two brass guns……The disturbances in the district had been increasing both in number and enormity. Kuer Dildar Ally Khan, a large *Zamindar* in Pergunnah Maot, was murdered by his villagers.' Several other murders were committed.

"The outrage committed by the insurgents had been very great ; the town of Rayah had been completely plundered ; the very houses dug to pieces in search of treasure. The atrocities committed on some of the *buniahs*' wives will not bear repetition. The confusion and anarchy of the country exceeded belief ; in a circle of a few miles, above five or six *Zemindars* had declared themselves independent, assumed the title of *rajah* and proclaimed the king of Delhi. In one instance a single village split into two factions, one-half proclaimed a rajah, the other half the *Zemindars* ; the impression that the English rule had ceased was universal".

In Agra the retreat of the British force to the Fort was signalised by the burning of buildings. The rebel troops followed it beyond Shahgunj. The march of the insurgent rebel army had been accompanied by hordes of villagers, ready to take advantage of a reverse on either side, and to plunder the vanquished. "On the morning after the battle the town crier, at the order of Morad Alee Kotwal, proclaimed the reign of the King of Delhi through the city. From the time of the proclamation the property of Christians, wherever they could be found in the city, was plundered, and themselves, man, woman and child, ruthlessly murdered. The state of the District outside the city was, in one word, anarchy. The first attacks were made by the Goojurs of the neighbouring villages, joined by some of the followers of Deohunse Goojur, who

then gave up the town of Iradutnugur to plunder. For five weeks carriages laden with the spoils of the plundered villages continually passed along the road to Dholepoor. Proprietors of estates bought at auction were ejected by former owners. Anarchy prevailed and plunder on all sides......"

In Banda, all the bungalows in cantonments were plundered and burnt to the ground and Nawab Ali Bahadoor proclaimed his own rule. The sepoys then proclaimed their own Raj in opposition to that of Nawab Ali Bahadur issued on the previous night at which they were much incensed. The Nawab, however, managed to appease their wrath by giving them a great dinner of sweetmeats and by acknowledging their authority. "In the pergunnahs the news spread like wildfire, and the villagers rose in every direction and plundered and murdered each other promiscuously. Old enmities and the long smothered wish for revenge were forthwith satisfied. Auction purchasers and decree-holders were ousted, travellers and merchandize plundered, and the servants of Government compelled to fly for their lives; and, in all instances, Government buildings and property of every description were plundered and destroyed. Everyman's hand was against his neighbour, and the natives revelled in all the license and madness of unchecked anarchy and rebellion. *Tulwars* and matchlocks were scarce in Bundelcund; but armed with spears and scythes, and iron-bound lathies and temporary axes formed by chopping knives fastened on sticks, they imagined themselves to be warriors, chose their own Kings, and defied all comers. Never was revolution more rapid, never more complete". Pending a reference to Nana about the claims of two rivals—the Nawab and the chieftain of Adjygurh—for the throne of Banda, the former was allowed to take charge of the country. The dispute led to a fight between the two about the middle of August, and again in October. Nawab Ali

maintained his position, and sought to pacify the Hindus by prohibiting the slaughter of the cows. But the Muhammadans regarded the scene as a holy war to exterminate the *Kafirs* and Mahomedan dates were officially introduced. Nawab Ali Bahadur, however, was not the only ruler of the district. At Kirwi, in the western part, Narayan Rao and Madho Rao declared themselves as Peshwas, both being second to bear these names in that illustrious line. Thus, in the words of a modern historian, who fully relied on the account given above, in Banda "the revolutionary flame was in full blaze", "the popular character of the rebellion" was manifested in the "destruction of the church and the desecration of the Christian burial ground", "and the revolutionary government started on the fullest of impulses."[40]

In Hamirpur the Europeans, including the Magistrate, were murdered, and anarchy was the order of the day. The mob and sepoys rushed up to the town and plundered everyone they could lay their hands on; old scores were wiped out in blood, and the Christian preacher, Jeremiah, and his whole family were slaughtered unresisting.

"The Bengalee Baboos as writing English were next attacked, and though they begged their lives, lost everything they possessed......There were three boats of unarmed sepoys of the 44th and 67th Regiments, those I believe who were disarmed at Agra, passing by on the 18th June; the guns were turned on them and opened, many were killed, the boats taken and the goods found in them made over to men of the auxiliary chiefs, the sepoys being left to get on their way as best they could. The sepoys and the auxiliaries now fell out about the money in the treasury amounting to a lakh and a half; on July 1, the Peshwa's rule was proclaimed. Once more anarchy prevailed in Hamirpur, the Romeree *Zemindars* levying blackmail on whom they pleased, and committing all kinds of violence.

"I need scarcely say that the great ure in the

rebellion here has been the universal ousting of all bankers, *baniyas*, Marwarees, etc., from landed property in the district, by whatever means they acquired it, whether at auction, by private sale or otherwise, and also that the larger communities have profited immensely by the time of anarchy, while many of the smaller ones have been ruined and dispersed ; those who were strong enough to plunder with impunity did so, the others were the victims. This, however, must have been equally the case all over the country."

Jhansi presented a similar scene of anarchy and confusion. The Rani, who is supposed to have led the war of independence, thus describes the condition of the District in a letter to the Commissioner of the Sagar Division :

"The Urzee of the Tahsildars and thanadars of Puchare dated 11th June, 1857, states that the Jagirdar of Khuneeadhana of Elaka Jhansee has attacked the district with a hundred matchlockmen and taken possession of the fort of Ahar and the Thakoors of Kuphar etc. have taken forcible possession of the fort Mehraunee and turned away the police sephaees from there, and the same things are going on in other places. No policeman can be got to take service. If all the Gurhees are in this manner taken possession of by these people, the district will be ruined ; if assistance be rendered some arrangements can be made, otherwise everything must go to ruin."

The Rani sums up the position by saying that "in all the *elaqas* (i.e. subdivisions) subordinate to Jhansi the chiefs have taken possession of the Gurhees, while others are plundering the country", and that "it is quite beyond her power to make any arrangement for the safety of the district".[41]

There were outbreaks in Jubbulpore District where 179 rebel leaders appeared in arms. It is unnecessary to describe at length the activities of such local chiefs who

established their ephemeral authority over small areas. Some of them assumed royal titles. For example, the fort of Rahatgarh, 24 miles from Sagar, was seized by Fazil Muhammad who assumed the title of Prince of Mandasor. Faizuddin Muktear proclaimed Soal Singh as the Raja of Ajaigarh. Many of them are definitely known to have old scores to pay against the British. The Raja of Banpur, the most prominent of them, who later fought hard against the British, had many grievances to complain of, and cherished the hope of gaining the entire kingdom of Chanderi, the ancient possession of his ancestors, on the expected fall of the British rule. He at first played a double game, negotiating for terms and territories, but eventually rebelled and seized Chanderi. Many other chiefs rose in revolt because they had lost their *obari* rights in several of their villages, or their estates had been in whole or in part resumed by the Government. The Rani of Jaitpur, a State annexed by Dalhousie on the Doctrine of Lapse, set herself up as a ruler at Jaitpur, but was driven away by the Chirkaree troops. The Rani of Ramgarh took up arms to get rid of the Court of Wards which managed the State.

B. AVADH

Grave discontent was caused by the annexation of Avadh among all classes of people. Apart from the general discontent that inevitably follows all such annexations, it was aggravated by the subsequent incidents, such as the spoliation of the Nawab's palace ; the lack of timely help which reduced the members of the royal family to utter penury, even to the miseralb econdition of begging for food ; the new policy of land-settlement which deprived the *Talukdars* of their property ; the imposition of new and obnoxious duties such as those on stamps, petitions, food, houses, eatables, ferries and opium which laid a heavy burden on the common people,—mostly peasants who were already

suffering from heavy assessment of land-revenue. These were quite recent happenings, hardly a year old, and the people still remembered how the outlying portions of Avadh, then constituting the North-Western Provinces of the British, were forcibly taken away by them. No wonder that the people of Avadh—meaning the original kingdom—who fully shared the general discontent and grave apprehension of loss of religion would grow specially restive. In Avadh, again, the sepoys were mostly recruited from the people and there was no hard and fast line of demarcation between the two as in other parts of India. It is natural, therefore, that the sepoys, as well as other classes of people, would grow more excited than elsewhere, and the civil population would show more sympathy to the mutinous sepoys who were mostly their own kith and kin. Events proved this to be the case. Nowhere else, outside the old Suba or kingdom of Avadh, were the mutinies of sepoys so successful and wide-spread, and, what is more important, led to outbreaks of civil population on such a large scale. It is only against this background that the civil rebellion in Avadh can be understood in its true perspective.

Reference has been made above to the mutiny of the sepoys at Lakhnau on May 3, which was easily suppressed. The news of Mirat and Delhi reached there on May 14 and 15. On the night of May 30, there was another rising in course of which the Brigadier was shot and the Officers' bungalows were burnt. But nearly five to six hundred men of the three native regiments remained loyal, and next morning Sir Henry Lawrence, who had been given plenary power in Avadh, had no difficulty in dispersing the mutineers who all fled after a few discharges from his guns and marched to Delhi. The same afternoon (May 31) about five or six thousand Muslims raised the standard of the Prophet and attempted a rising of the civil population, but the police put them down.

During the month of May the province of Avadh had remained comparatively quiet and, unlike Rohilkhand, British administration was regularly carried on throughout the province, But after the mutiny at Lakhnau on May 30/31 mutiny became general throughout the Province. This was evidently due, partly to the example of Lakhnau, and partly to the constant stream of mutineers pouring into Avadh from outside. But whatever may be the cause, "every detachment without exception threw off control". "In every instance the mutiny of a regiment was followed by the loss of the district to which it belonged". In the course of ten or eleven days, English administration in Avadh had vanished like a dream, and not a single representative of the British Government was to be found at any of the stations in Avadh. It is, however, a singular fact that the common people as well as the *Talukdars*, with a few exceptions, treated the fugitive Europeans with genuine sympathy and kindness.

The political vacuum thus created led to a situation not much dissimilar to what took place in Rohilkhand. But there were some special features. The *Talukdars* of Avadh, who had lost their lands by the new system of land tenure, immediately rose as a class and resumed the lands, which had been taken away from them, by forcibly ejecting their new masters who had purchased them at auction sale. The *Talukdars* had not only powerful motive but also a strong incentive to revolt by the strength and security of their position. Their numbers were great and they had a common cause to fight for. They were well armed and almost every *Talukdar* had a fort surrounded by dense jungles. It has been estimated that in course of the suppression of the outbreak, "1572 forts had been destroyed and 714 cannon, exclusive of those taken in action, surrendered".[42]

Although the common people had not the same grie-

vances as the *Talukdars,* all classes of people joined in the fray for reasons mentioned above. Even the cultivators, who were protected by the British against the rapacity of the *Talukdars,* joined their old masters who were their natural chiefs, and with whom they had a special tie.

The rebellion in Avadh had another advantage over that in Rohilkhand. It had a rallying point in the Nawab family which was dispossessed of its domains only a year back. The last Nawab was practically a prisoner in Calcutta, but his cause was upheld by his queen, Begam Hazrat Mahal. Her minor son, Birjis Quadr was selected as Nawab on 7 July and his coronation in Lakhnau was accompanied by booming of guns. A regular administration was set up with Sharf-ud-daulah as Prime Minister, and the important offices were judiciously distributed among the Hindus and Muslims, The chief authority was however wielded by Begam Hazrat Mahal.

It should not be supposed, however, that the whole of Avadh rallied round the authority of the Begam. As in the North-Western Provinces, so in Avadh, a number of local chiefs set up tiny independent kingdoms, some of which were contested by more than one rival claimant. Almost the whole of Avadh and bordering regions were parcelled out among the *Talukdars* and other Chiefs, many of whom possessed one or more well-fortified strongholds and a large number of troops. Among these may be mentioned Muhammad Hasan of Gorakhpur, Mehndi Hasan of Sultanpur, Beni Madho Baksh of Sankarpur, Narpat Singh of Ruya, Udit Narayan and Madhu Pershad of Birhur, Devi Bux Singh and the three Singh *Zamindars* of Dhurua.

It is unnecessary to describe in detail the risings in different parts of Avadh which followed the pattern of N. W. P. For henceforth the chief interest of the rebellion in Avadh is centred round Lakhnau, the capital city of the late Nawabs, the British, and the rebel government of Birjis Quadr.

As mentioned above, the mutiny of the sepoys at Lakhnau on May 30 and 31 set ablaze the whole of Avadh; yet, strangely enough, the British authority in Lakhnau remained undisturbed and intact for some time. But Sir Henry Lawrence was fully alive to the impending danger. He selected the Residency, on the bank of the Gumti river, as the place of refuge for all Europeans. It consisted of a number of detached dwelling houses and other buildings, of which the Residency itself was the most conspicuous, the whole area being defended only by rude mud walls and trenches. He took measures to improve the defences and erected batteries along the line of entrenchment.

On June 29, 1857, a large body of rebel army was reported to be advancing towards Lakhnau. Lawrence started the next morning and met them at Chinhat, about ten miles to the north-east of the city. After an artillery duel, the mutineers, advancing with a steadiness that extorted the admiration of the British officers, were already threatening to outflank their handful of opponents, when the desertion of some of Lawrence's native gunners and the flight of his native cavalry decided the fortune of the day. Lawrence gave order to retreat and the retreat soon became a rout. The mutineers blocked the way to Lakhnau by occupying a bridge over a small rivulet. But a small squadron of British volunteers, with sabres flashing, hurled themselves upon the dense masses, and the sepoys broke and fled.

The remnants of the British army reached the Residency, but the rebel force followed in their wake and invested it the same afternoon (June 30). Thus began that memorable siege which is perhaps the most amazing episode in the whole military history of the Mutiny. It is difficult to conceive of a more unequal contest. A small force of British soldiers and civilians and loyal sepoys, altogether numbering less than 1,700, burdened with a number of women and children, had to defend themselves in ordinary

buildings with mud walls, protected by hastily improvised defences, against six thousand trained soldiers, who were soon reinforced by a constantly increasing number of *Talukdars* and their retainers, till their number reached one hundred thousand or perhaps even more.

The besieging sepoys at Lakhnau were inspired by the presence of the Begam of Avadh and Maulavi Ahmadulla who were the leading spirits in the resistance against the British; yet, to the astonishment alike of friends and foes, the tiny garrison held out for nearly three months till relief came on September 25. At first the sepoys confined themselves to cannonading from a distance and a galling musketry fire from the neighbouring buildings, causing nearly fifteen to twenty deaths every day during the first week. One of the victims was Henry Lawrence himself, who was wounded by the bursting of a shell on July 2 and died two days later. Unable to create much effect upon the defenders by mere cannonading and musketry fires, the besiegers made a general assault on July 20; but although they reached the walls and some of them displayed great feats of courage, the attack was repulsed with heavy loss after four hours' desperate fighting. The general assault was repeated on August 10, August 18, and September 5, but always with the same result. The siege continued, and its further course will be related later. It will suffice here to state that while the rebels could not capture the Residency at Lakhnau, several British expeditions also failed to dislodge them, and Lakhnau was not re-occupied by the British till the beginning of March, 1858.

The siege of Lakhnau served as a crucial test of the nature of the revolt in Avadh. The banner of the defunct kingdom of Avadh was unfurled again after a year, and if there were a genuine spirit or a real mass movement to fight for the King and the country (even taking it in the narrow sense of Avadh rather than India), one

would expect a ready response from the hundreds of Chiefs who set up baronial principalities all over the province. Lakhnau was the focal point of the fight for freedom and Begam Hazrat Mahal was a brave and resourceful leader, not unworthy of the cause. Nothing is more natural than that the Chiefs of Avadh should rally round her flag and place their entire energy and resources at her disposal without a moment's hesitation.

But what were the actual facts ? The most crucial point in deciding this question is the behaviour of the Chiefs and *Talukdars*. As there are sharp differences of opinion on this issue, specimens of different types of views may be quoted : Innes is definitely of opinion that only a very few *Talukdars* joined in the attack of the Residency before Havelock's withdrawal in the early part of August, and that even on the 10th of the month, the mass of *Talukdars* were holding aloof. Later on, their retainers joined in the attack on the Residency on September 5, but as a body, they had not even then taken any active part in the siege or shown hostility to the British. Holmes, agreeing with Innes, comments as follows on the second unsuccessful attempt of Havelock to relieve Lakhnau, on August 12, to which reference will be made in the next section,

"The retreat had a serious political effect. The talukdars of Oudh, with few exceptions, had hitherto remained passive, watching events. One of their number, Man Singh, who played a double game with great craft throughout the struggle, had advised them to have nothing to do with the mutineers. But when Havelock withdrew from the province, they felt that the British Government was doomed ; and some of them wrote to inform the authorities at Benaras that they had no choice but to send their retainers to join in the siege of the Residency."[43]

The views of Innes, supported by Holmes, have been criticised by Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri. But it seems he has

not succeeded in rebutting the arguments advanced by Holmes in support of Innes and demolishing the conclusion of Holmes that there is no positive evidence that before the issue of Canning's Proclamation (March, 1858) any *Talukdar* took the field *in person*, except Man Singh, the three *Talukdars* who fought against the British at Chinhat (30 June) and four others, mentioned by Gubbins.[44]

If, even the most minute investigations of Dr. Chaudhuri have failed to elicit more positive evidence than what he has collected, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the *Talukdars*, with a few exceptions, did not join the revolt and rally round the flag of Begam Hazrat Mahal *at the beginning of the struggle*. The majority comprised those who, *at a later date*, joined the rebellion, a few of whom swore to fight for their country till the last.

Dr. Chaudhuri has referred to Raja Man Singh of Shahgunj as one of the *Talukdars* taking a prominent part in the rebellion, and his being elected leader by the sepoys of Fyzabad on June 10. Fortunately, a few positive facts are known about him on unimpeachable authority. Henry Lawrence had appealed to the *Talukdars* for support before the outbreak, and Man Singh, one of the most powerful and influential among them, had promised his loyal support to the British and gave shelter to fugitive British women and children in his fort. In July he addressed a circular letter to the other *Talukdars* urging them to support the British. According to Gubbins, he sent his brother on a mission to Nana and at the same time carried on correspondence with the British. Early in September he encamped with a large army near Lakhnau, but did not take any part in the siege. He was still negotiating with the British, and the besieged at Lakhnau did not know whether he was a friend or foe. Dr. Sen observes : "His presence, therefore, was a source of anxiety as well as hope. If he chose to join the rebels the handful of Englishmen

and Indians in the Residency would be simply crushed by overwhelming numbers. On the other hand, if he decided to help them the garrison could reasonably expect to hold their own and beat back the enemy".[45] But Man Singh did not definitely commit himself to either party though he professed allegiance to the English ; he evidently desired to be on good terms with both the belligerents until, at least, he could be more sure about the possible result. After the failure of Havelock to relieve Lakhnau, Man Singh joined the mutineers, probably because he thought that theirs was the winning cause. In September and October, 1857, he was fighting against the English ; in February, 1858, he remained entirely neutral ; and in July he actively joined the British. Lieut. Majendie justly observed that "it is very difficult to specify the number of occasions when Man Singh changed sides".[46]

Man Singh and his brother Ramdin Singh, who followed his example, may be regarded as typical of the *Talukdar* class in general so far as their mentality, if not activity, is concerned. Most of them had been stirred up to action by the withdrawal of the British officers, and made haste to recover the lands they had lost. Then they played a waiting game, looking for the winning horse. A few of them backed the right horse, but most backed the wrong one.[47] The second retreat of Havelock in August seemed to them to be decisive, and many of them, *now for the first time*, sent their levies to Lakhnau. Whether they were at first really as friendly and loyal to the British, as Innes supposed, may be doubted, but they certainly were not actuated by any special love for, or allegiance to, their country or its defunct royal house. There were a few exceptions, here and there, but there is no evidence that their number was large. Reference may be made to three of them, namely, Hanumant Singh, Beni Madho and Muhammad Hasan. They represented a new class who, in

addition to recovery of their landed properties and preservation of religion, also included allegiance to the king of Avadh among the motives which impelled them to fight. But it is interesting to note that not one of these three, though powerful and valorous, did actually rally round Begam Hazrat Mahal and unreservedly place his resources at her disposal. None of them played any important part in the life-and-death struggle before Lakhnau which was to determine the fate of the revolt.[48]

C. BIHAR.

As mentioned above, the Rajput landlord, Kunwar Singh of Jagdishpur, placed himself at the head of the mutinous sepoys of Danapur after their arrival at Arrah. There is no basis for the popular belief that Kunwar Singh had been already meditating on a plan to assail British authority. Every evidence, so far available, corroborates the statement of Tayler, the redoubtable Commissioner of Patna, that Kunwar Singh was all along a friend of the British, but "was afterwards driven into rebellion by the short-sightedness of the Bengal Government."[49] This refers to the refusal of that Government, in 1857, to save Kunwar Singh from bankruptcy and ruin by undertaking the management of his heavily encumbered landed estates, although this proposal was strongly recommended by two successive Commissioners of Patna. How he was forced to join the mutinous sepoys at Arrah is described as follows by Nishan Singh, who was a faithful attendant of Kunwar Singh and was present in Arrah at the time.

"Meanwhile the rebellious sepoys of Dinapore reached Arrah and looted the town. And they threatened the servants of Kunwar Singh to bring him there or they would loot Jagdishpore (i.e. the native place of Kunwar Singh). This threat was not made in my presence and I state it according to what I have heard. Accordingly Kunwar Singh came from

Jagdishpore to Arrah on the very day the sepoys had arrived at Arrah i.e. 18th Savan."[50]

On July 27 the Danapur mutineers reached Arrah and, as usual, looted the treasury and almost every bungalow, released the prisoners and burnt the civil court and many other houses. Then under the leadership of Kunwar Singh they attacked Boyle's house where the European residents and fifty Sikhs sent to help them had taken shelter. But the small besieged garrison kept up a sharp fire and forced the mutineers to retreat. The Sikhs stood solidly behind the European besieged, and were not moved either by an appeal to their religious and racial sentiments or by the tempting offer of Rs. 500 each as a price of desertion.

On the 29th a detachment under Captain Dunbar, sent from Patna for the relief of the garrison at Arrah, was attacked at night when it was entering the suburbs of Arrah, and forced to retreat with heavy loss. Kunwar Singh now proclaimed himself the ruler of the country and set up his own machinery of administration. But it was shortlived. On August 3, Vincent Eyre advanced towards Arrah and was opposed by Kunwar Singh. But Eyre defeated his force at Gujrajgunj, close to Arrah, and not only relieved the garrison at Arrah, but also sacked Jagdishpur, the residential village of Kunwar Singh, after again defeating him on August 12. After this disaster Kunwar Singh proceeded with the sepoys and his own retainers towards Sasaram in the south.

In the meantime the rebellious spirit affected the civil population in Shahabad as in Rohilkhand and Avadh. The administrative machinery set up by Kunwar Singh must have collapsed after his defeat and flight. But sporadic acts of rebellion continued on a wide scale. It was estimated that seven to ten thousand men were involved—mostly "the warlike population of the Rajput villages headed by brave chieftains".

There was a similar upsurge in the Gaya district, in which several local leaders followed in the footsteps of

those of Rohilkhand. Hyder Ali Khan of Rajgir Pargana "collected a large body of men, proclaimed himself Raja and drove away all Government servants". Judhar Singh of Arwal also played a similar part. "He set up his own rule, making grants of land and even whole villages to his followers". Fourteen villages in Wazirgunj, 14 miles to the east of Gaya, raised the flag of independence under Kusal Singh, a *ticadar* of many villages. Other local leaders also proclaimed the fall of the "English raj" and prevailed upon the shop-keepers and traders not to pay their dues to the British Government.

There was also a wave of insurrections in Chota-Nagpur among the aboriginal tribes. "...The military at Hazaribagh revolted on 30 July, 1857, the Ramgarh battalion on 1 August, the infantry and artillery at Lohardaga on 2 August, and the detachment of the Ramgarh troops of Purulia on 5 August..."

Both Ranchi and Doranda soon fell under the control of the mutinous sepoys who, as usual, plundered the treasury and released the prisoners. Some of the *Zamindars* helped the mutineers, while others helped the British officials. The mutiny was merged into a general rising of the civil population in Singhbhum and Palamau. There was a widespread insurrection among the Kols of Singhbhum organized by Raja Arjun Singh of Porahat and his brother. To quell this insurrection proved to be a difficult task. Though repeatedly defeated, the Kols bravely resisted till the capture of the Raja of Porahat in 1859.

The Cheros and Khairwars of Palamau rose under the leadership of two brothers, Pitambar Sahi and Nilambar (or Lilambar) Sahi. They attacked Chainpur, 2 miles distant from Daltonganj, on 21 October, 1857, but were repulsed by its owner Raghubir Dayal Singh, who gave protection to Lieutenant Graham and his small force when, by the end of November, "the whole country appeared to be up

in arms", according to an official report. It was a difficult job to put down the revolt in an area of 40 miles square of intractable hills and dense jungles,—so dense that an enemy might be within a few hundred yards of troops without being discovered. As measures of retaliation "their villages were destroyed, their goods and cattle seized, and their estates confiscated to the State". But the insurrection continued throughout 1858 with unabated vigour, marked by plunder of villages and guerilla fights with British forces. Nilambar Sahi and Pitambar Sahi were ultimately captured and hanged, and the revolt was completely subdued in 1859.

Sambalpur was the scene of a prolonged and protracted rebellion under the leadership of Surendra Sai. It was really a continuation of the disturbances created by him, first in 1827-9 and then in 1839-40, as his claim to the throne of Sambalpur was rejected by the British Government. He was sentenced to life imprisonment, but was released from prison by the mutineers in 1857. "From the close of 1857 to the commencement of 1862 he remained in a state of war, ran a parallel Government of his own and kept the whole country in a dangerous state of excitement'".[51] He surrendered in 1862 and the disturbances ceased for the time being. But they were cotninued by his lieutenants till 1864.

The rebellion in these hilly regions was no doubt of a 'popular character', but there was nothing new in it. They had similarly rebelled many times before"[52] and in several cases, as in Sambalpur, the outbreaks in 1857 were mere legacies of the past. To describe it as "a people's war fought with the passions roused up by deeply stirred political sentiment"[53] can only be regarded as hyperbole. They differed in degree, but not in kind, from the previous disturbances noted above.

D. THE PANJAB

In the Panjab the Government successfully worked

upon the traditional hostility between the Muslims and the Sikhs, and the Panjabis and Hindusthanis. The important Chiefs, like those of Patiala, Nabha, and Jhind, stood firmly by the British. The Panjab therefore remained mostly unaffected by outbreaks of civil population, save in the eastern fringe, contiguous to Delhi and Rohilkhand.

In the Western Panjab the civil population remained unaffected, a notable exception being the rising of the Kharrals under Ahmad Khan in Multan on September 17. Joined by several other tribes on the Ravi, he fought several engagements, in one of which he was killed. At one time the insurrection took a serious turn, but was thoroughly crushed in November.

In the Eastern Panjab the mutineers were joined by the civil population in several places, and the mutinies almost partook the character of those of Rohilkhand. At Hissar and Hansi a large number of Europeans and Christians were killed, and a petty official put himself at the head of the administration under the style Shahzada. At Sirsa the rising took a communal turn. The Hindus fled and the Muslims plundered not only the treasury but also the town and the neighbouring villages. The predatory tribes of the locality took full advantage of the situation, and the Gujars, Ranghars, Pachhadas, Bhattias etc. looted all alike. Some Jath villages in Karnal district refused to pay revenue. They drove out the Government officials, burnt Government buildings, and committed robberies and murders. They had little respect for the mutineers and freely robbed the sepoys who were proceeding to Delhi. In some cases even the ordinary villagers helped the Government against the sepoys. There were also outbreaks at Rohtak and Rewari, but these were easily suppressed.

III. RESTORATION OF ORDER

As soon as the news of the Mutiny reached Lord

Canning, the Governor-General, he took all possible steps to concentrate all the available forces from Bombay, Madras, and Pegu in Calcutta. At the same time he ordered John Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner of the Panjab, to send down every available Sikh and European soldier from the Panjab to Delhi. In answer to Canning's appeal Colonel James Neill of the 1st Madras Fusiliers arrived in Calcutta towards the end of May, and was entrusted with the work of securing Banaras and Allahabad, and relieving Kanpur.

Neill arrived at Banaras on June 3, and next day came the news of the mutiny of sepoys at Azamgarh (June 3). It was decided, as a measure of safety, to disarm the 37th N. I. at Banaras, though they had as yet showed no signs of disaffection. So a parade was held on the 4th June at 5 P. M. in order to disarm the 37th N.I. with the help of the European troops aided by the loyal Sikhs and Irregular Cavalry. The sepoys submitted without resistance, though not without protest. Then, suddenly, the European troops were seen coming with cartridges and grape-shots, and all along the sepoy line ran the cry that they had come to kill the sepoys. Some of the sepoys took up the arms they had laid down and fired upon the European troops. The latter returned the fire and the artillery poured in a shower of grape upon the mutineers who fled. There was also fearful discharge of grape from the artillery against the Sikhs, who broke and fled. Neill, who had taken command in the meantime, pursued the Sikhs and gained a complete victory.

Fortunately for the British, the Raja of Banaras and some leading Sikh and Hindu Chiefs loyally stood by them. But Neill was not content merely with the suppression of the mutiny. He proclaimed the majesty of the British power by instituting a veritable reign of terror in which the guilty and the innocent were alike treated with the most barbarous cruelty.

The event of Banaras had wide repercussions, as the sepoys now came to believe that even loyalty and faithfulness was no guarantee against ill treatment by the authorities. Further, the news spread that the men of the 37th N. I. had been disarmed first and then killed, and this easily led to a wide-spread belief that the British officer, had matured a plan of exterminating the entire Bengal Army.

There is little doubt that the mutiny at Allahabad was the direct result of such feelings. The 6th N. I., posted there, had offered to march against the mutineers at Delhi, but on 6 June they rose in arms. The usual things happened. The convicts were released ; the city mob joined the sepoys ; Europeans were hunted out and killed ; houses were plundered and burnt, and even Hindu pilgrims suffered at the hands of the rowdies. Indeed no element was lacking in making it a "tremendous upsurge of the city populace". They "first inaugurated a religious war by hoisting the flag of the Prophet in the *chouk.* They then joined the sepoys in pillage ; railway works and telegraphic wires were destroyed the treasury plundered, and records burnt. After a short period the universal rapine with all its confusions began to take the shape of an organised rebellion and culminated in the assumption of power by Maulavi Liakatali, a common school master and a weaver by caste, who proclaimed the rule of the King of Delhi and passed himself as his governor."[54]

But though the city was lost the British still held the fort, mainly with he help of 400 loyal Sikhs. Neill hastened from Banaras to relieve Allahabad. As horses were not available, he made the peasants draw his coach and reached Allahabad on 11 June. Within a week he cleared the city of all insurgents and then let loose his myrmidons who perpetrated all sorts of cruelties and barbarities that human ingenuity could conceive. Indiscriminate

hanging and shooting without regard to age or sex, and general burning and plundering of houses and entire villages were the order of the day, regular punitive expeditions being sent for this purpose both by land and the river. But to the credit of Neill must it be said that "within a few days he had paralyzed the insurgent population of a crowded city and a wide district, and had rebuilt the shattered fabric of British authority."[55] A movable column was now formed at Allahabad "for the relief of Lucknow and Cawnpore and the destruction of all mutineers and insurgents in North-Western India"[56] Henry Havelock, who was placed in command of this column, left Allahabad on July 7.

As mentioned above, Nana Sahib proclaimed himself as Peshwa on 30 June. While he was enjoying himself in his palace at Bithur with feasts and revels, and issuing grandiloquent proclamations[57] announcing the extermination of the English, Havelock was advancing with an army for the relief of Kanpur. The military inefficiency of Nana and his sepoys was as manifest in their opposition to the advancing British troops as during their siege of Kanpur. His army chose an excellent position on the banks of a river, Pandu-nadi, 23 miles from Kanpur. But with an incredible folly they did not destroy the bridge which spanned the river. The British troops charged over the bridge, captured the enemy's guns, and forced them to retreat towards Kanpur.

Nana marched out with five thousand men and chose a very strong and strategic position on the Grand Trunk Road, about seven miles from Kanpur. But Havelock, after a brilliant display of strategy and courage, completely defeated Nana's troops. Nana rallied his troops and made a heroic stand, planting a gun in the middle of the road which created great havoc upon the advancing British troops. But again the superior dash and courage of the British

men and officers carried everything before them, and the sepoys rushed back in head-long flight from the battlefield (July 16). It culminated in a veritable rout, and Nana's troops melted away in no time. Nana himself rode straight to Bithur and fled with his family to the other side of the Ganga. It is reported that he covered his flight by declaring to his followers that he was going to commit suicide by drowning himself in that sacred river. This report, however, cannot be verified.

Next day Havelock entered Kanpur—only to find that the English prisoners—men, women, and children—were all killed in the most brutal manner. Neill having arrived at Kanpur on 20 July, Havelock proceeded towards Lakhnau (25 July) and won several victories. But "cholera, fatigue, exposure, and the fire of the enemy made such sad inroads on his little army" that though he made two successive attempts to relieve Lakhnau, he had to retreat each time for want of reinforcements.

The retreat of Havelock had a very serious effect. The *Talukdars* or Chiefs of Avadh, who were hitherto sitting on the fence, now felt that the British Government was doomed, and cast in their lot with the rebels.[58]

For his failure to relieve Lakhnau Havelock was superseded in favour of Sir James Outram. Outram reached Kanpur on September 15, and immediately organized an expedition for the relief of Lakhnau. The British army fought two battles on the way and joined the garrison at Lakhnau on the evening of the 25th. But the main object of the expedition, viz., to remove the besieged people to a place of safety, such as Kanpur, was not fulfilled. For the army was not strong enough for the purpose, and sufficient means of transport were not available for conveying the women and children, the sick and the wounded. Outram, therefore, decided to wait until the arrival of a strong relieving force.

After the fall of Delhi, Sir Colin Campbell, the new Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in India, made the relief of Lakhnau his first objective. He started from Calcutta on October 27, and reached the city about the middle of November. After defeating the opposing forces he joined the besieged in the Residency on November 17, but in view of the large number of mutinous sepoys still surrounding that city, and the immediate need of relieving Kanpur, he did not continue his operations against the mutineers. Instead, he decided to start for Kanpur with the women, children, the sick, and the wounded, leaving Outram to hold the rebels in check until his return. The Residency was vacated, and Outram took his position at Alambagh outside the city. Havelock had died of dysentery at Lakhnau on 24 November.

In the meantime clouds were gathering round Kanpur. After the defeat and fight of Nana, the real authority and initiative had passed into the hands of his able and devoted lieutenant Tantia Topi, to whom reference has been made above. Shortly after Havelock left Kanpur, Tantia gathered round him, or joined, a force of four thousand men at Bithur and threatened Kanpur, On hearing this news Havelock returned and inflicted a severe defeat upon Tantia Topi on 16 August. Then Tantia received orders from Nana to proceed to Gwalior to win over the sepoys of the Gwalior contingent. He succeeded in his task and, returning with the mutinous troops, seized Kalpi. Henceforth Tantia took his orders from Rao Sahib, the nephew of Nana, whom he had sent to Kalpi. Rao Sahib asked Tantia to seize Kanpur. Leaving a small detachment for defence, Tantia advanced upon Kanpur which was left in charge of General Windham with a small force. Though Tantia was defeated on the Pandu-nadi on 26 November, he attacked Kanpur the next day, and after a strenuous fight for two days repulsed the British troops. The whole city as well as the baggage and

stores fell into his hand. But the entrenchments and the bridge of boats over the Ganga were still in the possession of the British. At this critical moment Sir Colin Campbell, the British Commander-in-Chief, who had gone to relieve Lakhnau, hastened back to Kanpur and won a complete victory over Tantia's troops on 6 December. That was the last battle fought for Kanpur. Tantia fell back upon Kalpi, and his future activities were confined to the region further south, to which reference will be made later.

Grand preparations were now set on foot to reconquer Avadh. This task was facilitated by the generous assistance offered by the Government of Nepal. A Gurkha army had already arrived in July, 1857. At the request of Canning Jang Bahadur entered the British territory in December, 1857, at the head of an army of nine thousand men in order to help Sir Colin who had equipped a very powerful army and left Kanpur for Lakhnau on 28 February.

Outram was defending his post at Alambagh, outside the city of Lakhnau, with a force which originally amounted to 4,442 men, of whom three-fourths were Europeans, and twenty-five pieces of artillery. As against this, the besieging force consisted of at least over a hundred thousand men.[59] But in spite of their vast superiority in numbers they could not dislodge Outram from his fortified post at Alambagh, though they made several attempts to do so.

On hearing the news of the huge preparations being made by Campbell, Maulavi Ahmadulla made repeated assaults on February 15, 16, 21 and 25, but failed on each occasion. These failures sealed the fate of Lakhnau. On March 3 and 4, the advanced section of the British army reached the outskirts of the city, and though the sepoys fought with stubborn courage, and offered resistance till the last, contesting every inch of ground even within the city itself, the British gained possession of the whole city by 21 March. The Gurkha troops under Jang Bahadur had joined the

British army on 11 March, and took part in the assault on Lakhnau.

But the fall of Lakhnau did not materially contribute to the weakening of the rebellion in Avadh. Sir Colin Campbell did not follow up the capture of Lakhnau by any serious attempt to pursue and cut off the forces besieging that city. About sixty or seventy thousand armed men, with forty or fifty guns, who were thus allowed to retreat, scattered themselves all over Avadh, and their number was swelled by numerous other rebels roaming at large in that Province. Fortunately for the British, these had no cohesion among themselves and were divided into a large number of groups. Each of these groups mostly acted for itself, and it is only on rare occasions that two or more of them joined to fight the common foe.

The most important of these groups was led by Begam Hazrat Mahal, acting in close concert with that under Mammu Khan, her close confidant. Then there was Maulavi Admadulla, who had played the most distinguished part in the siege of the Residency at Lakhnau. The other leaders such as Rambaksh, Behunath Singh, Chandabakhsh, Ghulab Sing, Narpat Singh, Bhopal Singh, and Firuz Shah, were scattered over the Province, never staying long at the same place, though they held some strong fortified places as their citadels.

After the fall of Lakhnau, the Maulavi had taken up his position at Bari, 29 miles from that city, while the Begam with six thousand followers went to Bithauli. The Maulavi formed a very skilful plan to defeat the British force sent against him by Sir Colin, but it was foiled by the indiscretion of his cavalry, and he was forced to retreat. The Begam left her post without any fight as soon as the British force advanced.

Sir Colin now made an elaborate plan for the re-conquest of Rohilkhand. Three columns advanced upon

the country from the north-west, south-west, and south-east, and Sir Colin himself left Lakhnau on 7 April. All these columns were to converge on Bareilly.

The first notable incident in the campaign was the heroic resistance offered by Narpat Singh of Ruya, fifty-one miles north-west of Lakhnau. The British infantry attacked the fort, but being decimated by a heavy fire, had to retreat, and more than a hundred men were killed, including Col. Adrian Hope. But Narpat Singh knew his own weakness and fled during the night.

The most distinguished leader of the rebels in Rohilkhand was Khan Bahadur Khan of Bareilly, mentioned above. Sir Colin reached the city on May 4. Though surrounded by the enemy in all directions, Khan Bahadur Khan made a brave stand. A fierce battle took place the next day, but though he was defeated, his men gave a good account of themselves. After six hours' severe fighting the British gained a complete victory and occupied Bareilly the next day (May 6). Khan Bahadur Khan effected his escape with the greater part of his army, and continued his resistance against the English.

While Colin was proceeding against Bareilly, Maulavi Ahmadulla marched with a strong force against Shahjahanpur, which was left in charge of a small detachment. The Maulavi was joined on the way by the Raja of Mohamdi and Mian Sahib, one of the Chiefs of Lakhnau, "each at the head of a considerable body of armed men, most of them mounted". He reached Shahjahanpur on May 3, 1858, with nearly eight thousand cavalry, and found the small English force entrenched within the jail enclosure. For more than a week the Maulavi bombarded the position with his eight guns, but could not capture it. Colin, on hearing the news, sent a force to its relief. The Maulavi disputed its passage across a river, but failed. He was forced to raise the blockade of the British

entrenchment, but still remained at large with his force intact, and joined by a large body of rebels from the neighbouring areas, including the Begam, Firuz Shah, and some followers of Nana Sahib. Sir Colin himself marched to Shahjahanpur and defeated the Maulavi, who, however, eluded his grasp, and, nothing daunted, raided another station named Pallee. He had assumed the title of the King of Hindusthan and inspired so much terror by his activities, that the Governor-General offered a reward of fifty thousand Rupees to any one who could arrest him. On June 5, the Maulavi went to Powain on the Avadh-Rohilkhand border, a few miles from Shahjahanpur, but the Raja of this place shut his gate against him. He had a parley with the Raja who stood on the rampart, but unable to win him over, decided to break open the gate. The door was already tottering and creaking, when the Raja's followers fired a volley and shot the Maulavi dead. The Raja immediately cut off his head and himself carried it on an elephant to the Magistrate of Shahjahanpur, who stuck it up on the Kotwali. Thus ended the career of one of the greatest patriots and leaders of the revolution of 1857, though he was not really regarded as such, either by the contemporary Indians or their successors.

After finishing the campaign in Rohilkhand, Sir Colin Campbell proceeded to the more arduous task of subduing Avadh. There were three distinct categories of rebels, viz., (1) the mutinous sepoys ; (2) the troops under the Begam ; and (3) the *Talukdars* and Chiefs, and their retainers. The sepoys, however, gradually receded into the background, and the struggle was chiefly maintained by the *Talukdars.* Their spirit of resistance received a stimulus by the Proclamation of Canning, dated March 20, 1858, but actually issued after the fall of Lakhnau, in which they had read their own doom. "That proclamation professed to confiscate the whole proprietary right in the

soil of Oudh, save in the case of six comparatively inferior Chiefs. To rebel landowners who should at once surrender to the Government, immunity from death and imprisonment was promised, provided only they could show they were guiltless of unprovoked bloodshed". The effect of this proclamation could be easily foreseen. The *Talukdars*, faced with ruin, adopted an attitude of stiff resistance, and some of them fought with heroic courage.

By the end of September, 1858, the relative position of the British and the rebels in Avadh was somewhat as follows. The British "held a belt of country right across the centre of the province, from east to west; while districts north and south of that belt were either held by the rebels or were greatly troubled by them. North of the belt were the Begam (of Avadh), Mammu Khan, Firuz Shah, Hardat Singh, and leaders less notorious, with their followers; south of it were Beni Madho, Hanumant Singh, Harichand, and others. Besides these, in the north-eastern corner of the province, near the Nepal frontier, Nana Sahib and his adherents were believed to rest"[59a] It is not possible to describe in detail the prolonged and obstinate resistance offered by them, singly or in groups, and a few examples must suffice. Devi Buksh, the Raja of Gonda, organized the Rajput clans on the left bank of the Gogra and put up a stiff resistance. A number of clansmen gathered under the able Chief, Beni Madho, mentioned above, who, like Tantia Topi, avoided any serious engagement, and adopted the tactics of a guerilla warfare. His followers, numbering about 80,000, chiefly matchlock-men, were scattered over a wide area of which they knew every inch of ground. They made surprise attacks on small units of British troops, whenever they found any opportunity, and retreated before strong enemy forces without offering any battle. By means of these skirmishes they ceaselessly harassed the British troops, but always eluded them. Ghulam Husain, who

commanded a rebel force of three thousand men, one-third of whom were trained sepoys, with two guns, threatened Jaunpur. Muhammad Husain fought several times with the British at Amroha and Hariah. Lal Madho Singh hurled defiance at the British from his fort at Amethi, "seven miles in circumference, composed of mud walls and surrounded by a jungle.". Another leader named Nizam Ali Khan, with a considerable following, in concert with Ali Khan Mewati threatened Pilbhit. Then there were Khan Bahadur Khan of Bareilly with about four thousand followers, the Nawab of Farrukhabad with five thousand, and Wilyat Shah with three thousand, still at large.

The rebel *Talukdars* and Chiefs not only fought with the British but had to fight against members of their own class. Many of them strongly resented the conduct of the Raja of Powain towards Ahmadulla, related above, and took up arms to punish him. But the Raja was saved by their disunion and the timely arrival of the British help. Babu Ramprasad Singh, a *Talukdar* of Saraon, who showed sympathy towards the British, was attacked by a confederate group of rebels, who burned his house, sacked the town, and took him and his family prisoners. Raja Mansingh of Shahgunj in Fyzabad Division, who was at one time believed to be an arch-rebel and put under arrest, had thrown in his lot with the British. For this a large rebel force, 20,000 strong with twenty guns, attacked his fort but dispersed on the arrival of the British.

In spite of determined and heroic resistance, the people or *Talukdars* of Avadh could never hope to succeed against the British, after the latter had practically suppressed the armed rebellion everywhere else. But although many rebel bands were defeated and many *Talukdars* offered their submission, the spirit of the rebellion was as strong as ever, thanks mainly to Canning's Proclamation.

As soon as the cessation of rain, early in October,

made military operations practicable, the Avadh Chiefs took the offensive. They were, however, defeated in several engagements and both sides suffered heavy casualties. A number of isolated rebel forces were also defeated. Sir Colin Campbell, now Lord Clyde, encircled the rebel troops by sending columns from the west, south and east, and thus pushed them towards the Nepal frontier. He wanted to seize the strongholds of the powerful Chiefs, mostly Rajputs, one by one. After several Chiefs had surrendered, Shankarpur, the stronghold of Beni Madho, eight miles in circumference, was besieged by British troops. When asked to surrender, Beni Madho refused to do so, saying that he would evacuate the fort but not surrender his person, as he was a subject of the Nawab of Avadh, and not of the British Government. He actually left the fort with 15,000 followers and several guns. Though pursued by three armies, and defeated in several engagements, he always succeeded in effecting his escape.

But although some of the rebel Chiefs eluded his grasp, the campaign of Sir Colin Campbell was a complete success. By winning battle after battle and demolishing fort after fort, he recovered the whole Province. An idea of the severity and difficult nature of the campaign would appear from the fact that "1572 forts had to be destroyed, and 714 cannon, excluding those taken in action, were recovered."[60]

Lord Clyde pursued Nana Sahib and the Begam of Avadh to Bahraich and other places till they crossed the border and entered Nepal. Many other rebel leaders, before following their example, offered the last fight at Banki, on the banks of the Rapti, on December 30, 1858. After their defeat at Banki, a number of leading rebel Chiefs with their followers surrendered to the British. Others entered Nepal. Some of them perished in the swamps and hills of the Terai, and some threw away their arms and stole back to

their homes. Some, in desperate mood, rushed back into Avadh and were again defeated and forced back into the pestilential hills and jungles of Nepal. Among these were Nana Sahib and his brother Bala Rao. Lord Clyde, with his task accomplished, returned to Lakhnau on Janusry 18, 1859.

It now remains to describe two other principal military operations, not altogether unconnected with those described above. The first is a sort of roving campaign by Kunwar Singh extending over wide areas, while the second is confined to the south of the Ganga and the Yamuna, and concerns chiefly Bundelkhand and neighbouring regions of Central India.

Mention has been made above [61] how Kunwar Singh had to leave his homeland and retire towards Sasaram. After some desultory movements he marched towards the west and passed through Rohtas, Mirzapur, Rewa and Banda. The details of his activities during this long journey are not known with certainty, but it appears that he joined the mutinous Gwalior sepoys at Kalpi and fought under Tantia against the British in the battle of Kanpur on 6 December. Kunwar Sing then proceeded towards Azamgarh.

About this time the large concentration of British troops at or near Lakhnau had left Eastern Avadh comparatively unguarded, and a big rebel force, 14,000 strong, including 2500 sepoys, entrenched themselves at Belwas, a fortified camp near the town of Amorha, 9 miles to the east of Fyzabad. The rebel forces consisted of several groups, and attacked the British camp on March 5, 1858. After a severe engagement, in which the sepoys fought with great courage and determination, they were defeated and were forced to fall back on their entrenched camp. The British force was unable to storm this position, and a considerable part of this rebel force marched to the south-east. It

was joined by many other rebel groups on the way, till it reached Atraulia, and effected a junction with the troops of Kunwar Singh (March 17 or 18).

Col. Milman, who was encamped near Azamgarh, proceeded against this rebel force, but being defeated by Kunwar Singh, retreated to his camp. Not being able to hold out there, he continued his retreat to Azamgarh. On March 26, Kunwar Singh occupied Azamgarh and blockaded the entrenchment of the British troops. These, reinforced from Varanasi and Ghazipur, attempted a sortie on the 27th, but being repulsed, retreated within the entrenchment and remained on the defensive. Kunwar Singh maintained his position till April 15, when further reinforcement of British troops appeared on the other side of the river Tons which flows by Azamgarh. There was nothing left for Kunwar but to escape, and this he did by a brilliant manoeuvre. Leaving part of his troops to oppose the crossing of the river by the relieving force, he marched with the rest of his troops towards the south. Flying before one column closely pursuing him, and eluding another which was sent to the borders of Bihar to cut off his retreat, he crossed the Ganga at Sheopur with the British troops at his heels. The troops of Kunwar Singh crossed the river two to four miles west of Sheopur, and he arrived with them to his native village Jagdishpur on April 22. Here he was joined by his brother, Amar Singh, who had been hitherto carrying on a guerilla warfare, with several thousands of armed villagers. Next day Kunwar was attacked by a detachment of British troops from Arrah led by Le Grand. Kunwar Singh's troops were posted in a jungle near Jagdishpur, and Le Grand, after some cannonading, ordered a charge by the infantry. But the British were forced to retreat and the retreat was soon converted to a rout. It was a veritable disaster. Two-thirds of the British force, including the commander, were

killed, and the rest fled back to Arrah. But this was the last great victory of the old veteran. Three days later Kunwar Singh died at his own house at Jagdishpur. He had been hit by a cannon ball and his right wrist was amputated immediately after his arrival at Jagdishpur. Evidently this brought about the end on 9 May, 1858. After the death of Kunwar Singh his brother Amar Singh made an attack upon Arrah, but being repulsed, continued the guerilla warfare till the end of November, 1858.

In Bundelkhand, as in Avadh and Rohilkhand, the mutiny of the sepoys was followed by the rebellion of Chiefs and people, as mentioned above. The popular outbreaks, however, were not so serious or sustained as in the northern Provinces. Among the rebellious Chiefs also, only one, the Rani of Jhansi, played any really important part.

There is no evidence to show that the Rani of Jhansi had any hand in the mutiny of sepoys at Jhansi, early in June, 1857. Nevertheless, for reasons discussed above,[62] she was forced to take up a definitely hostile attitude towards the British at a later stage. Another Chief, the Nawab of Banda, had a similar history. Besides, there were several localities where the mutinous or rebellious spirit continued unchecked for a long time, as the hands of the British Government were too full with more serious outbreaks in the north.

It was not till towards the end of the year 1857 that a regular plan was drawn up for the campaign in Central India. According to this plan, a Bombay column under Sir Hugh Rose, consisting of two brigades, would start from Sehore and Mhow, and proceed by way of Jhansi to Kalpi on the Yamuna; while another column from Madras, under Whitlock, starting from Jubbulpur, would march across Bundelkhand to Banda. It was intended that these two columns would form part of a general combination, and support each other.

Rose opened the campaign by reducing the fort of Rathgarh and defeating the troops of the rebellious Raja of Banpur who had come to its aid. He then advanced unopposed to Sagar, where "the villagers, who had been mercilessly robbed by the rebels, assembled in thousands to welcome him". After reducing a few forts, which were in the possession of mutineers and rebels, he arrived with one brigade before Jhansi on March 21, 1858. The same night, the other brigade under Brigadier Stuart, after capturing Chanderi, joined him.

As soon as the Rani of Jhansi had decided to fight the British, she began to recruit troops, and applied for help to Tantia Topi. The latter, as noted above,[63] had been defeated at Kanpur on December 6, 1857, but he captured Chirkari. A number of Chiefs and a great gathering of people joined him there and Tantia organized "the army of the Peshwa", estimated at 20,000 or 25,000 men with 20 or 30 guns. At this time he received an appeal from the Rani of Jhansi to come to her aid. He referred the matter to the Rao Sahib and, with his permission, proceeded to Jhansi.

The garrison of Jhansi comprised about ten thousand Bundelas and *Velaities*, and fifteen hundred sepoys, while the force under the command of Rose consisted of only two brigades of about two thousand men. Notwithstanding the smallness of his force Rose invested the city and the fort with his cavalry on 22 March and commenced bombarding them with his batteries on the 25th. But, in spite of the heavy bombardment and the incessant galling fire from the British infantry, the besieged, under inspiring guidance of the Rani, offered a gallant resistance. "Their guns never ceased firing except at night. Even women were seen working in the batteries, and distributing ammunition". But in spite of their heroic courage the heavy bombardment battered down the parapets of the mound bastion and

silenced its guns on the 29th March, and next day there was a breach in the city wall.

At this critical moment Tantia Topi arrived at the outskirts of Jhansi with 22,000 men, mostly of Gwalior Contingent (March 31). The situation was one of great peril for Rose, but he decided to continue the siege, and fight with Tantia with a portion of his army. By a brilliant manoeuvre, with only fifteen hundred men, he completely defeated the host of Tantia who fled towards Kalpi (April 1, 1858). Two days later Rose took the city of Jhansi by assault, though it was defended with grim determination till the last. The Rani left the fort with a few attendants on the night of 4th April, and on the 6th the battle was over.

The Rani joined Tantia at Kalpi, and Rose, leaving a small garrison at Jhansi, marched towards that city. On the way, he was met by the Rani and Tantia at a town called Koonch. Though they were helped by several disaffected Chiefs and occupied a very strong position, they were severely defeated by Rose. Tantia went home, and the rest, falling back upon Kalpi, quarrelled among themselves, each section of the army accusing the other for the defeat. The consequent demoralization was so great that as the news reached Kalpi that Rose was marching upon that city, all the rebels dispersed in different directions. At this juncture the Nawab of Banda, who had been defeated by Whitlock, arrived at Kalpi with two thousand horse, some guns, and many followers. With utmost exertions the Rani of Jhansi and the Nawab of Banda succeeded in inducing the sepoys and other rebel groups to return to Kalpi and make a supreme effort to redeem their position. A considerable section of the people in the neighbourhood aided their efforts. Rao Sahib, the nephew of Nana, also was at Kalpi.

On May 22, Rose was attacked by the rebels, but they were completely defeated. Next day when the British advan-

ced through the ravines to Kalpi, they found that the enemy had fled and the city was almost completely deserted.

Rao Sahib and the Rani of Jhansi fled to Gopalpur, about 46 miles south-west of Gwalior. There they were joined by Tantia Topi. Their position was now desperate in the extreme, but it is only at such a crisis that latent genius sometimes asserts itself. They now conceived the very daring plan of seizing Gwalior by winning over the troops of Sindhia. In all probability, the grand plan was conceived by the Rani of Jhansi. It was a masterstroke of high strategy. With Gwalior in their hands the rebels would be able to cut off the direct communications of the British in North India with Bombay, while they would have a brilliant opportunity of rallying the whole Maratha country in the south against the British. A British historian has destribed the idea to be "as original and as daring as that which prompted the memorable seizure of Arcot."[64]

Daring the plan undoubtedly was. The rebels had no resources to carry out the task in the ordinary way, but they counted on the mutinous instincts of the Gwalior army and took the risk. With the shattered remnants of their force the three leaders arrived before Gwalior on May 30, 1858. On June 1, Sindhia marched out with his army to oppose them. Sindhia's infantry and cavalry, with the exception of his bodyguards, either joined the rebels or took up a position indicative of their intention not to fight. Sindhia turned and fled to Agra. There can be hardly any doubt that the army of Sindhia was won over by secret negotiations. The three leaders—Rao Sahib, Rani of Jhansi, and Tantia—entered the fort of Gwalior, seized the treasury and the arsenal, and proclaimed Nana Sahib as Peshwa.

The seizure of Gwalior "created a sensation throughout India only equalled by that which was caused by the first mutinies". Sir Hugh Rose left Kalpi on June 6 and, advancing by forced marches, arrived on the 16th within five miles

of the Morar cantonments, near Gwalior, which were guarded by the rebel troops. He immediately attacked them and carried the cantonments by assault. Thus he regained the mastery of the road to Agra, and this enabled the brigade under Smith to reach Kotah-ke-serai, about four miles to the south-east of Gwalior.

We do not possess any reliable account of the activities of the rebel leaders during the fortnight following their capture of Gwalior. But it appears that there was no military preparation to oppose the British forces till they arrived within a few miles of Gwalior from different directions and occupied the two strategic positions of Morar and Kotah-ke-serai. The Rani herself led the troops and took up her position on the range of hills between Gwalior and Kotah-ke-serai. Smith immediately attacked this force, but met with a stiff resistance. "Clad in the attire of man and mounted on horseback, the Rani of Jhansi might have been seen animating her troops throughout the day. When inch by inch the British troops passed through the pass, and when reaching its summit Smith ordered the hussars to charge, the Rani of Jhansi boldly fronted the British horsemen. When her comrades failed her, her horse, in spite of her efforts, carried her along with the others. With them she might have escaped but that her horse, crossing the canal near the (Phulbagh) cantonment, stumbled and fell. A hussar, close upon her track, ignorant of her sex and rank, cut her down. She fell to rise no more".[65] According to another account the Rani was struck by a bullet. Thus died the Rani of Jhansi, and Sir Hugh Rose, the Commander of the British army against which she fought from the beginning to end, paid her a well-deserved tribute when he referred to her as "the best and bravest military leader of the rebels".

Next day, June 18, Rose joined Smith, but it was not till the 19th morning that the main body of troops

came out of the Gwalior fort to attack him. Rose immediately attacked them, and after a short but sharp engagement, drove away the rebels and occupied the city.

Next morning, June 20, after making arrangements for the pursuit of the flying rebels, with Tantia among them, Rose attacked the strong fortress and carried it by assault. On that very day Sindhia re-entered his capital, and, according to official accounts, "the streets through which he passed were thronged by thousands of citizens, who greeted him with enthusiastic acclamations". According to the same accounts, only twenty-one were killed and wounded on the British side during the five days' operations before Gwalior.

The pursuing column overtook the flying rebel army at Jowra Alipur on June 22. There was hardly any resistance. "In a few minutes all was over. Between three and four hundred of the rebels were slain ; and Tantia Topi and Rao Sahib, leaving all their guns on the field of battle, fled across the Chambal into Rajputana".

Henceforth Tantia followed the tactics of guerilla warfare. He was pursued by four British detachments but slipped through them all, and wandered in Malwa and Rajputana. He once even crossed the Narmada. At last, worn out with fatigue and thoroughly disheartened, he crossed the Chambal and hid himself in the jungles near Seronge which belonged to Man Singh, a feudatory of Sindhia. Being deprived of his estate by the latter, Man Singh had rebelled, but was defeated by a British detachment. He was wandering in the forest when he chanced to meet Tantia, and the two became very friendly. As soon as the British Commander came to know of this, he won over Man Singh by holding out the hope of restoring his wealth and position. Man Singh not only surrendered, but led a few sepoys of the British detachment to the hiding place of Tantia Topi. The sepoys found Tantia asleep, seized

him, and carried him to the British camp at Sipri. He was tried by a court martial on April 15, 1859, and was hanged on the 18th in the presence of a large crowd.

The capture of Tantia was the last important act in the suppression of the revolt in Central India. The wonderful guerilla warfare which he had carried on for ten months against enormous odds elicited admiration even from his opponents, and may be looked upon as a fitting end to a struggle which was hopeless almost from the very beginning.

Before concluding this chapter it is but proper to make a reference to the fate of the principal leaders. Among those who surrendered, persons originally belonging to Avadh received a specially favourable treatment. The underlying prlnciple seems to be that as Avadh was a very recent annexation, not by conquest, but on grounds whose propriety was doubted by many, an old subject of the king of Avadh who fought against the British was treated as an enemy engaged in legitimate war, rather than as a rebel against his Government. The Begam of Avadh endeavoured to come to an agreement with the British, but failed.

Nana Sahib also made an attempt to come to terms with the British. In his letter[66] to the Brithish authorities, dated 20 April, 1859, Nana denied his complicity in the mutiny and disclaimed all responsibility for the murder of the British women and children, saying that "they were killed by your sepoys and Budmashes (scoundrels) at the time that my soldiers fled from Kanpur and my brother was wounded".

Evidently the correspondence led to no settlement. Bala Sahib, who joined his elder brother Nana in his flight to Nepal, also sent a petition to the British authorities. He was less defiant than Nana, and in a way made Nana responsible for his own part in the rebellion. But Bala's

cringing attitude was no more helpful than the defiant challenge of Nana, whose last words to the English were: "Life must be given up some day. Why then should I die dishonoured? There will be war between me and you as long as I have life, whether I be killed or imprisoned or hanged, and whatever I do will be done with the sword only". This spirited challenge to the British is perhaps the only act in Nana's life that would raise his character in the estimation of posterity.

Being pressed by Lord Clyde on all sides, both Nana and the Begam as well as some rebel leaders were forced to enter Nepal with their parties. Jang Bahadur declared as early as January, 1859, that he would not afford protection or shelter to the refugees from India, and employed troops for their capture and expulsion. It was in such an encounter that Beni Madho, the popular hero of Shankarpur, met with his death. Some Chiefs were delivered to the British authorities, and some died in Nepal. Birjis Quadr of Avadh was, however, given shelter. Nana Sahib and his family spent their last days in Nepal. But there were rumours and even official reports, recurring at intervals, throughout the nineteenth and the first quarter of the twentieth century, of Nana being found in India. Several persons were even arrested as Nana and then released. All these created such an excitement that at last the Government of India came to the wise decision that even if the real Nana were found in India, he should be ignored rather than arrested.

IV. ATROCITIES

An important feature of the great outbreak of 1857 is the perpetration of horrible deeds of cruelty on both sides. Indeed some of the acts were of so brutal a nature, that a writer has described it as a contest between two savage races, capable of no thought but that regardless of all justice or mercy, their enemies should be exterminated.

The first act of cruelty, animated by racial hatred, was the indiscriminate massacre of Englishmen at Mirat, where the people were stirred by one common impulse to slaughter all the Feringhees, sparing neither women nor children. It is alleged that helpless women were butchered without mercy, and children were slaughtered under the very eyes of their mothers. When the sepoys of Mirat reached Delhi, the terrible scenes were repeated there, and a number of English men, women, and children were done to death by the sepoys and others in cold blood.

Mirat and Delhi set the tempo of the revolt, and indiscriminate massacre of English men, women and children marked the rising, not only of sepoys, but even of the civil population, in many places. The massacre at Jhansi was of particularly heinous type, as noted above. In some cases the tragedies enacted were of ghastly character. A letter dated from Varanasi on June 16, 1857, describes the following scene witnessed by the writer at Allahabad. "A gang of upwards of two dozen sepoys.........cut into two an infant boy of two or three years of age, while playing about his mother ; next they hacked into pieces the lady ; while she was crying out of agonising pains for safety,... felled, most shockingly and horridly, the husband."[67] Similar incidents happened at Bareilly.

So far about the cruelty of the Indians towards the English, mostly narrated by the English themselves. We may now turn to the other side of the shield. General Neill, who proceeded from Calcutta in May, 1857, with a regiment, towards Varanasi (Banaras) and Allahabad, gave written instruction to Major Renaud "to attack and destroy all places *en route* close to the road occupied by the enemy." Renaud "pressed on for three days, leaving everywhere traces of retributory power of the English in desolated villages and corpses dangling from the branches of trees." The executions of 'natives' were indiscriminate to the

last degree. Sherer has described a similar scene along the line of Havelock's march. Many of the villages had been burnt by the wayside, and human beings there were none to be seen.

On June 9, 1857, the Government of India caused Martial Law to be proclaimed in the Divisions of Varanasi (Banaras) and Allahabad. What followed is thus described by Kaye :

"Martial law had been proclaimed ; those terrible acts passed by the Legislative Council in May and June were in full operation ; and soldiers and civilians alike were holding Bloody Assize, or slaying natives without any Assize at all, regardless of the sex or age. Afterwards, the thirst for blood grew stronger still. It is on the records of our British Parliament, in papers sent home by the Governor-General of India in Council, that 'the aged, women and children are sacrificed, as well as those guilty of rebellion.' They were not deliberately hanged, but burnt to death in their villages—perhaps now and then accidentally shot. Englishmen did not hesitate to boast, or to record their boasting in writing, that they had 'spared no one' and that 'peppering away at niggers' was very pleasant pastime, 'enjoyed amazingly'.

One of the volunteers in the fort of Allahabad writes thus of the events subsequent to the arrival of Neill with his reinforcements.

"Every day we led expeditions to burn and destroy disaffected villages, and we had taken our revenge. I have been appointed the chief of a commission for the trial of all natives charged with offences against Government and persons. Day by day we have strung up eight or ten men. We have the power of life in our hands ; and assure you we spare not. A very summary trial is all that takes place. The condemned culprit is placed under a tree, with a rope around his neck, on the top of a carriage; and

when it is pulled away, off he swings".[68] "The system of burning villages", writes Holmes, "was in many instances fearfully abused. Old men who had done us no harm and helpless women, with sucking infants at their breasts, felt the weight of our vengeance, no less than the vilest malefactors ; and as they wandered forth from their blazing huts, they must have cursed us as bitterly as we cursed the murderers of Cawnpore."[69]

The same scene was witnessed in the western part of India. As General Barnard was marching to Delhi towards the end of May, 1857, many cruel deeds were wrought on villagers suspected of complicity in the ill-usage of the fugitives from Delhi.

A contemporary military officer observes :

"Officers now went to courts-martial declaring they would hang the prisoners whether guilty or innocent, and the provost-marshall had his cart waiting for them at the tent-door. Some brought the names of offending villages, and applied to get them destroyed and plundered on the strength of vague report. The fierceness of the men increased every day, often venting itself upon the camp servants, many of whom ran away. These prisoners, during the few hours between their trial and execution, were unceasingly tormented by the soldiers. They pulled their hair, pricked them with their bayonets, and forced them to eat cow's flesh, while officers stood by approving". The same writer refers to "fierce desire for blood" which "manifested itself on every possible occasion", and remarks that the "slightest whisper of anything short of indiscriminate vengeance was instantly silenced by twenty voices."[70]

The following may be cited as an example of the manner in which punishment was meted out to the mutineers at Peshawar. The fifty-fifth Regiment at Hoti Mardan in the Panjab was suspected of treason, but had committed no overt act of mutiny. At the advance of an English

force they fled towards the hills. Being pursued by Nicholson they turned back and fought bravely. But about 120 were killed and 150 captured. On June 10, 1857, forty of these were brought out, manacled and miserable, to the parade-ground. There, in the presence of the whole garrison of Peshawar and thousands of outsiders, the forty selected malefactors were blown up from the mouth of the guns.

The heart-rending scene of the massacre of the English at Kanpur, at the *Sati Chaura ghat*, has been described above.[71] But there were many other crimes attributed to Nana, culminating in the brutal massacre of the prisoners at Bibighar. The following account of these is given on the authority of Kaye. On the 12th June a number of European fugitives from Fategarh, mostly women and children, numbering 126, were coming down in boats to seek refuge in the British cantonment at Kanpur. They were seized and carried to Nana. All the men, with the exception of three, were killed in his presence, and the women and children, along with the other English prisoners, who were taken from the riverside, were kept in a small house known as Bibighar. All these prisoners, huddled together, were given very coarse food, and their sufferings were intolerable. The women were taken out to grind for the Nana's household. Cholera and diarrhoea broke out among them, and some of them fell victims to these diseases.

On the afternoon of the 15th of July, Nana Sahib learned that Havelock's army had crossed the Pandu river and was in full march upon his capital. On receiving this information Nana issued orders for the massacre of the women and children in the 'Bibighar.' There were four or five men among the captives. These were brought forth and killed in the presence of Nana. Then a party of sepoys was sent to shoot the women and children

through the doors and windows of their prison-house. But they fired at the ceilings of the chambers. So some butchers were called. They went in, with swords or long knives, among the women and children, and slashed them to death. And there the bodies lay, some only half-dead, all through the night. Next morning the dead and the dying were brought out and thrown into an adjacent well. Some of the children were alive, almost unhurt, but they were also thrown into the well."[72]

We may now turn to the other side. It is unnecessary to describe in detail the terrible retributions that the British soldiery took when they captured important cities, but a few words may be said about Kanpur, Delhi, and Jhansi.

In view of what Neill had done before the provocation offered by the massacre at Kanpur, it is easier to imagine than to describe in detail the terrible atrocities perpetrated upon the people of Kanpur. But one particular mode of punishment deserves to be on record as a proof of his fiendish nature. This is described by Neill himself as follows :

"Whenever a rebel is caught he is immediately tried ; and, unless he can prove a defence, he is sentenced to be hanged at once ; but the chief rebels or ringleaders, I make first clean up a certain portion of the pool of blood, still two inches deep, in the shed where the fearful murder and mutilation of women and children took place. To touch blood is most abhorrent to the high-caste natives; they think, by doing so, they doom their souls to perdition. Let them think so. My object is to inflict a fearful punishment for a revolting, cowardly, barbarous deed, and to strike terror into these rebels. The first I caught was a subahdar, or native officer—a high caste Brahmin, who tried to resist my order to clean up the very blood he had helped to shed ; but I made the provost-marshall to

do his duty ; and a few lashes soon made the miscreant accomplish his task. When done, he was taken out and immediately hanged, and after death, buried in a ditch at the road-side."[73]

The atrocities that followed the capture of Delhi by the British have been described by many eye-witnesses.

"Delhi was practically deserted by the inhabitants within a few days of its fall. Large numbers had perished in the hands of the infuriated British soldiers, and most of those who svrvived left the city, but hundreds of them died of exposure and starvation. Enormous treasures were looted, and each individual soldier amassed a rich booty. Almost every house and shop had been ransacked and plundered after its inmates were killed, irrespective of the fact whether they were actual rebels, or even friends of the British. The General had issued an order to spare women and children, but it was honoured more in breach than in observance. We need hardly wonder at this if we remember the general attitude of even educated Englishmen. A gentleman, whose letters, published in the *Bombay Telegraph*, afterwards went the round of the Indian and English papers, remarked 'that the general's *hookum* regarding the women and children was a mistake', as they were 'not human beings, but fiends, or at best wild beasts deserving the death of dogs'. He then describes the state of affairs on the 21st of September, i,e. the day after the city was finally and completely occupied by the British troops. 'All the city people found within the walls when our troops entered were bayoneted on the spot; and the number was considerable, as you may suppose, when I tell you that in some houses forty or fifty persons were hiding. These were not mutineers but residents of the city, who trusted to our well-known mild rule for pardon. I am glad to say they were disappointed'. I have given up walking about the back streets of Delhi, as yesterday an officer and myself had taken a party of

twenty men out patrolling, and we found fourteen women with their throats cut from ear to ear by their own husbands, and laid out in their shawls. We caught a man there who said he saw them killed, for fear they should fall into our hands; and showed us their husbands, who had done the best thing they could afterwards and killed themselves".[74]

The Bombay correspondent of the *Times* wrote: "No such scene has been witnessed in the city of Shah Jehan since the day that Nadir Shah, seated in the little mosque in Chandnee Chouk, directed and superintended the massacre of its inhabitants". Kaye observes: "Many who had never struck a blow against us—who had tried to follow their peaceful pursuits—and who had been plundered and buffeted by their own armed countrymen, were pierced by our bayonets, or cloven by our sabres, or brained by our muskets or rifles". There was slaughter on a large scale by one Mr. Brind in revenge of an attack upon a party of Sikhs. Holmes writes :

"A Military Governor had been appointed; but he could do little to restrain the passions of those who surrounded him. Natives were brought forward in batches to be tried by a Military Commission or by Special Commissioners, each one of whom had been invested by the Supreme Government with full powers of life and death. These judges were in no mood to show mercy. Almost all who were tried were condemned; and almost all who were condemned were sentenced to death. A four-square gallows was erected in a conspicuous place in the city ; and five or six culprits were hanged every day. English offiicers used to sit by, puffing at their cigars, and look on at the convulsive struggles of the victims".[74a]

As an English counterpart of Nana's cruelties reference may be made to the treatment accorded by Frederick Cooper of the Panjab to 26th N. I. In course of their flight the main body of sepoys were stranded in an island, and

Cooper sent boats with soldiers against them. Forty or fifty sepoys jumped into the river and disappeared. The remaining 282 surrendered in the hope that they would be tried by court martial. They were bound and brought to shore in several batches, each "stacked like slaves in a hold". They were then tightly bound and made to march six miles to the Police Station through knee-deep water. What followed is thus described by Cooper himself:

"Next morning, August 1, 1857, the prisoners were pinioned, tied together, and brought out thus, in batches of ten, to be shot. They were filled with astonishment and rage when they learned their fate. About 150 having been thus executed, one of the executioners swooned away (he was the oldest of the firing party), and a little respite was allowed. Then proceeding, the number had arrived at two hundred and thirty-seven, when the district officer was informed that the remainder refused to come out of the bastion, where they had been imprisoned temporarily, a few hours before......The doors were opened, and behold! they were nearly all dead! Unconsciously the tragedy of Holwell's Black Hole had been re-enacted...... Forty-five bodies dead from fright, exhaustion, fatigue, heat and partial suffocation, were dragged into light, and consigned in common with all the other bodies, into one common pit, by the hands of the village sweepers".[75]

Abundant evidence is furnished by the Englishmen themselves that everywhere the English officers made an indiscriminate massarcre of guilty and innocent alike. Cooper tells us: "Short shrift awaited all captures. The motto of General Nicholson for mutineers was *a la lanterne.*"[76]

Mrs. Coopland, a clergyman's widow, refers triumphantly to the achievements of Col. Cotton and his party at Fatehpur Sikri:

"They took a great many prisoners, and made them clean out the church; but as it was contrary to their 'caste',

they were obliged to do it at the point of the bayonet: some did it with alacrity, thinking they would be spared hanging; but they were mistaken, for they were all hung".[77]

Regarding Jhansi, R. M. Martin writes:

"On the 4th of April, the fort and remainder of the City were taken possession of by the troops, who, maddened by the recollection of massacre committed there, and by the determined resistance of the people, committed fearful slaughter. No less than 5,000 persons are stated to have perished at Jhansi, or to have been cut down by the 'flying camps'......Some flung themselves down wells, or otherwise committed suicide; having first slain their women, sooner than trust them to the mercy of the conquerors. The plunder obtained in the fort and town is said to have been very great. A large number of executions took place daily".[78]

Regarding Lakhnau (Lucknow), Majendie observes:

"At the time of the capture of Lucknow—a season of indiscriminate massacre—such distinction was not made, and the unfortunate who fell into the hands of our troops was made short work of—sepoy or Oude villager, it mattered not,—no questions were asked; his skin was black, and did not that suffice? A piece of rope and the branch of a tree, or a rifle bullet through his brain, soon terminated the poor devil's existence."[79]

We find the following minute in the proceedings of the Governor-General in Council, dated 24th December, 1857, regarding the state of affairs throughout the North-West Provinces and the Panjab in the previous July.

"The indiscriminate hanging, not only of persons of all shades of guilt, but of those whose guilt was at the least very doubtful, and the general burning and plunder of villages, whereby the innocent as well as the guilty, without regard to age or sex, were indiscriminately punished and in some cases, sacrificed, had deeply exasperated

large communities not otherwise hostile to the Government".[80]

Lieut. Majendie, an eye-witness, tells us how the Sikhs and Europeans together, after repeatedly bayoneting a wounded prisoner in the face burnt him alive over a slow fire.[81]

Sir Henry Cotton was told y a military officer that one day his Sikh soldiers requested him to come and see the mutineers who were captured by them. He went and found "these wretched Muhammadans at their last gasp, tied to the ground, stripped of their clothing, and deeply branded over every part of their bodies from head to foot with red-hot coppers".[82]

Russell observes : "All these kinds of vindictive, unchristian, Indian torture, such as sewing Mahomedans in pig-skins, smearing them with pork-fat before execution and burning their bodies, and forcing Hindus to defile themselves, are disgraceful."[83] To the same category belongs the policy, systematically followed by Neill, of *burning* all the dead bodies of Muslims and *burying* those of the Hindus, so that both might suffer eternal perdition.[84]

V. GENERAL REVIEW

1. NO ORGANIZED CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE BRITISH.

There are many popular notions about the outbreak of 1857 which are not supported by any evidence. The most important among them is the idea that it was organized by great Indian leaders like Bahadur Shah, Nana Sahib, Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi, and Kunwar Singh. It would appear from what has been said above that none of them joined the mutiny of the sepoys at the beginning, and that the first three of them denounced the sepoys and, according to their own statement, were forced against their will to join the ranks of the mutineers. The same

thing appears to be true as regards Kunwar Singh also, though in this case we have no personal statement but have to rely on the evidence of his close associate and Englishmen. The evidence on the basis of which Nana Sahib and Bahadur Shah are regarded as the organizer of the rebellion of the sepoys and the ruling Chiefs, or Bahadur Shah is supposed to have entered into a conspiracy with Persia and Russia, would not bear a moment's scrutiny. Rani Lakshmibai's correspondence with the British authorities leaves no doubt that her sympathy was all along with the British until she found that their unfounded suspicions about her could not be removed by any means. Neither she nor Kunwar Singh had any status at the beginning of 1857 which would enable them, jointly or severally, to organize a political conspiracy.

The utter lack of plan and organization, and even of cohesion among the different groups of rebels in neighbouring areas, clearly demonstrates that the outbreaks of civil population were not the result of a concerted plan of revolt but were merely sporadic in character.

The wide circulation of *chapatis,* just before the outbreak of 1857, is regarded by many as an important evidence in favour of an organized conspiracy. The *chapati* (small unleavened bread) is the staple food of a large section of people in India who do not take rice. It is proved on indisputable authority, that about the beginning of the year 1857 *chapatis* were passed on from village to village over a very wide area. A searching examination of many witnesses revealed the very interesting fact that nobody knew anything definite about either the object of the circulation of the *chapatis* or the original source from which the idea originated.[85] Some believed that it was intended as a preventive against epidemic or a propitiatory observance to avert some impending calamity. Some thought that the *chapatis* were circulated by the Government in

order to force Christianity on the people. Some held the exactly opposite view, *viz.*, that the *chapatis* were circulated to preserve unpolluted the religion which the Government proposed to subvert. Others held that it was meant to sound a note of alarm and preparation—a forerunner of some universal popular outbreak. It was also believed that the *chapati* was a sort of charm.

In view of this wide diversity of opinions it is puerile to attach any importance to the *chapatis* in connection with the outbreak of 1857. For even if it be taken for granted that the *chapatis* were deliberately designed by some as a signal for the outbreak, we may safely assert that it was certainly not understood by the people as such. It seems, therefore, to be certain that the large circulation of *chapatis* cannot be regarded as a primary or even contributory cause of the great outbreak of 1857.

2. SEPOY ORGANIZATION

In view of the preceding discussion we may dismiss the idea that the sepoys were merely tools in the hands of a few conspirators. There might have been factors or agencies to excite or incite them, but the mutiny was the work of the sepoys themselves. It is, therefore, necessary, to investigate whether there was any organization among the sepoys of different localities, and if so, what was their nature and extent.

As noted above, the mutinous sepoys at Mirat set the example of killing Europeans, burning their houses, and then marching straight to Delhi ; and this formed the general pattern of mutiny that took place in other cantonments at later dates. *Prima facie*, it seems to be the result of a previous understanding. This is supported by the following statement of Ahsanulla : "The Volunteer Regiment (38th N. I.) of Delhi said, that before the breaking out of the Mutiny, they had leagued with the troops at Mirat, and that the

latter had correspondence with the troops in all other places, so that from every cantonment troops would arrive at Delhi. After the defection of the native army, I understood that letters were received at Delhi, from which it was evident that they had beforehand made common cause among themselves. The mutineers at Delhi also wrote to other regiments requesting them to come over..............The usual draft of letters addressed by the Delhi mutineers was this: 'So many of us have come in here, do you also, according to your promise, come over here quickly'. Before their defection the native troops had settled it among them to kill all Europeans, including women and children, in every cantonment".[86]

Some other witnesses in the trial of Bahadur Shah also heard reports or rumour about a previous agreement between the sepoys of Delhi and Mirat. On the other hand, Munshi Mohanlal makes the following statement: "I heard from two sepoys that the mutineers at Meerut had not at first any idea of coming to Delhi. This was settled after a long discussion, when the advantages of this course (which are explained in details) appeared to be very great".[87] Sir John Lawrence says that Mohanlal's statement was corroborated by extensive and minute inquiries. He also adds that "the general voice (of the Meerut mutineers) at first was for seeking refuge in Rohilkhand", and "that a large party of these troopers actually fled through Delhi into the Gurgaon district the very next day".[88]

In view of this conflicting evidence, it is necessary to lay stress on a few points which are definitely known and are likely to throw light on the point at issue. In the first place, there was correspondence between sepoys of different parts of India regarding the greased cartridges. In particular, the disbanded regiments of Barrackpur took good care to intimate their views to the sepoys of distant cantonments, and even threatened them, saying: "If you

receive these cartridges, intermarriage and eating and drinking in common shall cease between yourselves and us".[89]

Secondly, the fact that sepoys all over an extensive area broke into mutiny within a month or two indicates some sort of previous negotiations and understanding. At the same time it is necessary to remember, that there was no simultaneous rising of the sepoys on a particular date, that the sepoys in many places were either steady in their loyalty or hesitant for a long time, and ultimately yielded only to persuasion, pressure or the sudden impulse of the moment. A concrete example is furnished by the statement of Ameen Khan, son of Kareem Khan, a sepoy of the 12th N. I. posted at Jhansi at the time of the Mutiny: "One man whose name is not known to me, a servant or a relation of some one in my Regiment, brought a chit from Delhi stating that the whole army of the Bengal Presidency had mutinied, and as the Regiment stationed at Jhansi had not done so, men composing it were outcastes or had lost their faith. On the receipt of this letter the four ringleaders, above alluded to, prevailed upon their countrymen to revolt and to carry out their resolution".[90]

These considerations support the statement of Ahsanulla that the plan of the mutineers had not been matured and, in particular, no date had been fixed when the sepoys broke out at Mirat. He is probably also not far from truth, when he attributes the premature rising at Mirat to one of the two causes, namely, "either the Mirat troops were too precipitate, or the Government behaved severely towards them". Ahsanulla also held the view that the native army mutinied of their own accord, and not at the instigation of any Chief, because in the latter case the mutineers would have either themselves proceeded to join their instigator or caused him to join them.[91]

He was of opinion that there was a plot among the sepoys in different parts of the country to rise against

the British, but he had no personal knowledge of it. He was, however, definite on the following points :

1. That the sepoys mutinied in the hope of material gain, and were not mainly inspired by considerations of religion or political freedom. For if so, "they would not have plundered the houses and property of the people, nor would they have oppressed and injured them, but would have fought only against the British Government."[92]

2. That the plot was confined to the sepoys and was not directed by any political leaders like Nana Sahib, Bahadur Shah, or Rani of Jhansi.

3. That the mutineers did not win over the people, and there was no understanding between the Hindu sepoys and the Mussalmans of Delhi.

4. The sepoys were joined y the riffraff in the hope of loot and plunder.

This lurid picture of the sepoys, drawn by an eminent contemporary who had ample opportunities of knowing the truth, no doubt gives a rude shock to our cherished sentiments. But it is fully corroborated by the conduct of the sepoys at Delhi during the long period of more than four months (from May 11 to September 20, 1857) when they were absolute masters of the city.[93]

A modified view of the sepoys has been given currency by Mr. Cracroft Wilson. "Carefully collating", he has written, "oral information with facts as they occurred, I am convinced that Sunday, 31st May, 1857, was the day fixed for mutiny to commence throughout the Bengal army ; that there were committees of about three members in each regiment which conducted the duties of the mutiny ; that the sepoys, as a body, knew nothing of the plans arranged ;......The committee conducted the correspondence and arranged the plan of operations."[94] But other authorities, fully competent to judge this question, did not believe that any plot was formed for a general mutiny.

This was definitely the view of Major Williams and Sir John Lawrence. The latter points out that "not one of the numerous letters ,which had been intercepted, written by the sepoys, contained so much as a hint of such a plot, and that none of the condemned mutineers who might have saved their lives by disclosing it, if it existed, knew anything of it."[95]

Lawrence advances another very cogent argument : "How is it that the people or soldiers did not rise simultaneously in insurrection ? I am told that the time fixed for it was anticipated by the Meerut outbreak. But if such was the case, how came it then that the news of that outbreak was not followed by immediate insurrection ? No preparation was necessary. But nothing of the kind occurred. It was only when the native troops saw how powerless we were that they resolved to convert what was a mere combination against what they fancied to be a gross oppression into a struggle for empire".[96]

Ahsanulla in his evidence gives good reasons for disbelieving the plot of simultaneous military rising on a particular date. Kaye also very justly observes that "the proofs of this general combination for a simultaneous rising of the native troops are not so numerous or so convincing as to warrant the acceptance of the story as a demonstrated fact". [97] Sir Syed Ahmad, also, did not believe that there was any plot for simultaneous rising, at least among the Muslims. On the other hand, he held the view that "thousands of loyal sepoys joined the mutineers, for they knew that the Government would have no longer any faith in their fidelity and would annihilate them at the first opportunity—as Englishmen had been put to death. Accordingly they all turned unfaithful and corps after corps mutinied".[98]

The detailed account of the mutiny at different places, so far as it is known to us, negatives the idea of a planned simultaneous rising on a fixed date as well as the manipula-

tion or engineering of the mutiny by outside influence. Even if we admit, for the sake of argument, that the sepoys of Mirat upset the pre-concerted plan by a premature rising, it stands to reason that once the mutiny had actually begun, the organizers should have fixed up another early date for such simultaneous rising. But the mutiny broke out at different times, between May 10 and the end of July, extending over a period of more than two months. Besides, the sepoys were loyal in many places long after 10 May, and then broke out into mutiny, either by a sudden impulse as at Aligarh, or at the instigation of utinous sepoys from outside, as at Jhansi.

Again, if the sepoys had really been incited to revolt by the machinations of leaders like Nana or the Rani of Jhansi—the so-called conspirators of Malleson—,they would have immediately joined these leaders, and if they failed to lead them, would have openly charged them with duplicity. But not only do we not come across any such thing but, as shown above, the leaders like Bahadur Shah, Nana, Rani of Jhansi and Kunwar Singh all joined the mutineers after the first outbreak at Mirat, and in almost each case we find the sepoys practically forcing them to join their ranks.

But while there was no general conspiracy by outside leaders whieh led to the mutiny of the sepoys, there is evidence to show that there was some sort of understanding, if not a regular conspiracy, among the sepoys stationed in different areas. The sepoys, as a class, had a number of grievances and it is not difficult to understand that they would make a common cause against the authorities. It is likely that some secret negotiations were going on between the leading sepoys of different cantonments, though the exact nature of this connot be ascertained. It is probable that the object of these negotiations was to organize a general mutiny, but for this we have got no definite evidence. All that we can say is that great excitement prevailed among

the sepoys, and large bodies of them were animated by a common feeling of animosity against the British. But though there might have been understanding and negotiations between the different bodies of troops, the plot was cofined to them, or rather to some leading figures in each group, and no connection has been established between the mutinous sepoys and the ruling Chiefs, or other prominent leaders mentioned above.

The most reasonable conclusion, therefore, seems to be that primarily the outbreak was a mutiny of the troops, and whatever plan or conspiracy might have been at the bottom of it, it was at first practically confined to the troops. They might have been excited by outside agencies like Maulavi Ahmadulla or some other persons, but the actual plot was hatched by the sepoys themselves.

3. GENERAL REVOLT

But while it is true to say that the outbreak was primarily the mutiny of the sepoys, there is no doubt that in some areas the commotion became widespread and soon developed the character of a general revolt. This will be evident from the details recorded above, particularly with regard to various localities in U. P, and small fringes of territories surrounding it.

It may appear strange to many that a revolt of such magnitude could break out without any pre-concerted plot by a number of leaders. But a little reflection would show that it was not only feasible but almost inevitable.

The mutiny of the sepoys revealed the very weak foundations on which the British authority rested in India. The successful mutiny of sepoys in almost every locality meant, in practice, the liquidation of British officers and therewith also of the British administration. The people naturally came to believe that the British *raj* was at an end, and merely took advantage of the political vacuum thus

created to serve their own ends. If there were no sepoy mutiny there would have been no revolt of the people, and it would have been very surprising indeed if sporadic outbreaks of civil population would not have followed each successful mutiny.

As mentioned above, there was widespread discontent among people of all classes. But neither discontent nor disaffection would normally result in a revolt unless a good opportunity presented itself. Such opportunity was afforded by the sudden removal of the restraining authorities by the successful mutiny. Immediately, different classes of people, actuated by different motives, proceeded to satisfy their own material interests. A grim realistic picture of this is offered by the detailed account of the revolt in various localities given above. The *Talukdars* of Avadh and the cultivators in N. W. P. took possession of the lands they had recently lost; people forcibly took from the *Baniyas* the bonds of debt they had executed; Chiefs fed fat their old grudge or acquired lands, and the Gujars, Ranghars and the *goondas* looted indiscriminately any one they could lay their hands on. This explains not only the wide and rapid spread of the revolts of civil population, but also some of the characteristic features of the rowdyism displayed by them, namely, destruction of courts and records, cruelty to the *Baniyas* and *Mahajans*, open fights between neighbouring Chiefs, and assumption of sovereignty by many local leaders. No other theory can explain the absence of not only any general organization but even of local co-operation between neighbouring areas until the avenging hands of the British spelt doom and destruction to them all.

A few individuals might have been prompted by nobler motive of patriotism, but that the generality of people had no such idea and merely utilized a godsent opportunity to satisfy their own interests admits of no doubt.

16

4. WAS THE GENERAL REVOLT A WAR OF INDEPENDENCE?

Divergent opinions have been expressed regarding the nature of the great outbreak of 1857. Volumes have been written on this subject, both by contemporary and later writers, and it is almost an impossible task to deal in detail with the different views and arguments advanced to support them.

These views may be broadly divided into two classes. Some think that the outbreak was really a rebellion of the people rather than merely a mutiny of the soldiers. Others hold that it was primarily and essentially a mutiny of sepoys, though in certain areas it drifted into a revolt of the people.

The second view had a large body of supporters among Englishmen, immediately after the suppression of the Mutiny. On the other hand, a large number of English writers, such as Norton, Duff, Malleson, Kaye and Ball subscribed to the first view and represented the outbreak of 1857 as an organized campaign to drive away the British from India. It is, however, significant that all the contemporary Indian writers, some of whom occupied very high position in public life, unanimously held the second view and looked upon the outbreak as essentially a military insurrection Thus Kishori Chand Mitra, an eminent Bengali, writing in 1858, says: "The insurrection is essentially a military insurrection. It is the revolt of a *lac* of sepoys...It has nothing of the popular element in it. The proportion of those who have joined the rebels sinks into nothingness when compared with those whose sympathies are enlisted with the Government. While the former may be counted by thousands, the latter may be counted by millions."[99] The same view was expressed by Sambhu Chandra Mukhopadhyaya[100] and Harish Chandra Mukh-

erji[101], two eminent Bengali public men, and Sir Syed Ahmad, who himself played an important role in the outbreak, as mentioned above,[102] and rose to high distinction as the leader of the Indian Mussalmans in the nineteenth century. Reference has already been made to the writings of three contemporary Indians[103] who were eye-witnesses of the events in Delhi and Bareilly. We have also the writings of one Bengali,[103a] who was in Varanasi on pilgrimage, when the sepoys broke out into mutiny there, and also a few casual references in the autobiography of Rajnarain Basu, who is regarded as the father of nationalism in Bengal. None of them felt any sympathy for the mutinous sepoys or the cause they represented, and all looked upon them as evil-doers rather than fighters for freedom. No reference is made by any of them to any popular support behind the mutiny. Godse Bhatji, a Marathi who travelled over North India during the outbreak, also expressed similar views.[104] Both the British Indian Association and the Muhammadan Association of Calcutta passed resolutions on the outbreak of the Mutiny, denouncing it and trusting that it would meet with 'no sympathy, countenance or support from the bulk of the civil population.'[105]

In contrast with the contemporary Indians, their descendants of the present day look upon the outbreak of 1857 as a general revolt of the people, and what is more curious, accuse the Englishmen of deliberately misrepresenting the great popular rebellion as a mutiny. It will be quite clear from what has been said above, that there is not the least truth in this accusation. The divergence of views did not follow any racial line, at least at the beginning, save that, so far as available evidence goes, it was the Indians, and not the Englishmen, who unanimously represented or misrepresented the outbreak as essentially a mutiny. That this was the general view of even eminent Indian statesmen down to the end of the nineteenth century is

proved by the statement recorded by Dadabhai Naoroji that "the people in India not only had no share in it (the Mutiny), but were actually ready at the call of the authorities to rise and support them."[106]

Today the Indians, generally speaking, subscribe to the views of Norton and his followers. Indeed, since the beginning of the present century, the pendulum has swung to the opposite extreme, and most Indians not only look upon the outbreak of 1857 as a great revolt of the people, but go even further and claim it to be the first 'Indian War of Independence.' This view has been made popular by the publication of a book with the above title by Sri V. D. Savarkar, an eminent Indian patriot, who played a very prominent part in India's struggle for freedom in the present century, and suffered much for his activities in the hands of the British authorities. A general revolt or a war of independence necessarily implies or presupposes a definite plan and organization. This is admitted in the latest edition of Savarkar's book where it is stated, about the outbreak of 1857, that the "national minded leaders and thinkers have regarded it as a planned and organised political and military rising aimed at destroying the British power in India".[107] Further, such an organization implies a pre-concerted conspiracy or plot to drive out the British. But, as shown in section 1 above there is no evidence for the existence of any such conspiracy. Indeed, it would be a travesty of truth to describe the revolt of the civil population as a national war of independence. National, it certainly was not, for the 'upsurge of the people' was limited to a comparatively narrow region of India, comprising at best the greater part of U. P. and a narrow zone to its east, west and south. The whole of Bengal, Assam, Orissa, and Rajasthan and greater parts of the Panjab, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, as well, as the whole of India south of the Narmada hardly witnessed any overt act of rebellion on the part of the people.

But even within the narrow zone where the civil population revolted, there were considerable sections who were friendly to the English. The ruling Chiefs in the East Panjab,—Maharajas of Patiala, Nabha and Jhind, and Nawab of Karnal,—the Sindhia of Gwalior, Holkar of Indore, the Nawabs of Bhopal and Jawra, the Rajas of Jhabua and Dhar, and the entire landed aristocracy of Bihar, with very few exceptions, firmly and consistently stood by the British Government. Even in Avadh and Rohilkhand, several Chiefs, including the Nawab of Rampur, did the same. One of them, Derigbijah (Digbijay ?) Singh, gave shelter to Mowbray Thomson, one of the survivors of the Kanpur massacre, at considerable risk to himself.

Even among the sepoys of the affected areas a certain number remained loyal till the last. Outside the Bengal army, native soldiers as a rule remained loyal or at least did not break out into open mutiny. Their number would be considerable, probably not less than the mutinous sepoys. The Sikhs and the Gurkhas not only remained loyal to the British, but actively helped in recapturing, respectively, Delhi and Lakhnau.

The general attitude of the people towards the English, even in the worst affected areas, was not uniformly hostile. Charles Raikes, who was a Judge at Agra during the Mutiny, bears witness to this.[108] Apart from his own personal knowledge of the good feelings of the people in May, 1857, he refers to Messrs. Phillipps and Bramly, civil officers of considerable position and experience at Agra, who traversed the country in June, 1857, from Furrukhabad and Etah in the Doab, and from Budaon in Rohilkhand, with a very small escort of three or four horsemen. They had been travelling for nearly a month amongst the villages, and on their arrival at Agra declared, that "the villagers are all on our side, except some of the Mahomedans".

The English-educated classes as a rule not only did

not join the movement, but were treated as enemies by the sepoys. This is known from the statements made by two contemporary Bengalis.[109] It is also supported by Mr. Raikes.

There are no good grounds to suppose that the experience recorded by Raikes was exceptional and not generally applicable to the country as a whole. Reference may be made in this connection to the many stories left on record by the British fugitives themselves, of the sympathy, kindness and active help rendered to them by the Indians, not unoften at grave peril to themselves.

The London *Times* wrote in July, 1857: "The general population has exhibited rather goodwill than hostility towards us and in many cases effectual protection has been afforded to fugitives". Again it wrote: "Out of the whole population of thirty-four millions and a quarter, we do not think more than fifty thousand joined the ranks of the insurgents, and these were headed by chiefs of small note".[110]

Another most significant fact, vouched for by several contemporary Indian writers, was the positive antipathy felt by a large section of Indians to the rebels; they had suffered so much in their hands that many sincerely prayed to God for the early restoration of British rule. Not only the *goonda* elements, but even the mutinous sepoys and other rebels, including Chiefs, were guilty of indiscriminate plunder and bloodshed. Many such incidents have been mentioned above. Tantia Topi himself has referred to such activities of the sepoys even while they were flying before the English troops.

Those who look upon the outbreak of 1857 as a national revolt advance as a strong argument in support of their view that it was a joint endeavour of the two great communities, *viz*.. Hindus and Mussalmans. But though the sepoys and the common people of both the communities fought together against the English, we miss that real communal amity which ought to characterize a national effort. It is a

significant fact that the contemporary Englishmen generally looked upon the outbreak mainly as a handiwork of the Muslims. Reference may be made to a few opinions out of many. Thus Raikes says: "They (the Muslims) have behaved in the part of India where I had jurisdiction, very ill ; so ill indeed, that if the rest of the population had sympathised with them, instead of antagonised, I should despair of governing India for the future. A military officer, who took part in the siege of Delhi, writes: "The Mahomedans were generally hostile to us, the Hindoos much less so". This feeling persisted in the official circle even long after the fall of Delhi. Referring to the city of Delhi, the same writer observes: "It was not till the end of November, that the Hindu portion of the population was allowed to return. No Mahomedans could get in at the gates without a special order, and a mark was set upon their houses and they were required to prove their loyalty before getting back again". Sir Alfred Lyall, at that time a young civilian in the Agra Province, "put the whole rebellion down to the Muhammadans". The whole of the English Press in Calcutta regarded it as a Muhammadan rebellion.

Not only the Europeans, but even the Muslims themselves, at least a section of them, believed that they were the senior partner in the great undertaking. Sir Syed Ahmad indirectly admitted the fact when he said : "The Muslims were in every respect more dissatisfied than the Hindus, and hence in most districts they were comparatively more rebellious, though the latter were not wanting in this respect".[111] The attitude is also reflected in the many Proclamations issued by the Muslim Chiefs who had assumed independent authority in various localities. Reference may be made to the two Proclamations issued by Khan Bahadur Khan of Bareilly, whose activities have been described above. Throughout his Proclamations runs the assumption that while the Muslims were exerting themselves to the utmost, the Hindus were

lukewarm in their efforts. Accordingly a bait was offered to the Hindus. "If the Hindoos", so runs the Proclamation, "shall exert themselves in the murder of these infidels and expel them from the country, they shall be rewarded for their patriotism by the extinction of the practice of the slaughter of the kine". But it was made abundantly clear that "the entire prohibition of this practice is made conditional upon the complete extermination of the infidels from India. If any Hindoo shall shrink from joining in this cause, the evils of revival of this practice shall recoil upon them".[112]

Thus the great difference between the Hindus and the Muslims loomed large even in the territories where the revolt of the civil population was most widely spread. An attempt was made to minimize the evil by emphasizing the paramount need of unity between the two communities. A Proclamation was issued at Delhi with the royal permission, urging the two communities to unite in the struggle. But the communal spirit was too deeply rooted to be wiped out by mere pious wishes embodied in proclamations. It raised its ugly head in the city of Delhi itself even when its siege by the British was imminent, and the fate of the whole struggle depended upon its successful defence by the combined efforts of all communities. Thus we read in Jiwanlal's Diary, under the date, May 19 :

"This day the standard of the Holy War was raised by the Mahommedans in the Jumma Masjid. The people of Dharampur and the low characters of the city were concerned in this act. The King was angry and remonstrated, because such a display of fanaticism would only tend to exasperate the Hindus."

On May 20, he writes : "Mahommed Said demanded an audience, and represented to the King that the standard of Holy War had been erected for the purpose of inflaming the minds of the Mahommedans against the Hindus."

But the communal spirit was not confined to Delhi. We learn from official report that on the night of the mutiny (June 4) at Varanasi "news was received that some Mussulmans had determined to raise the Green Flag in the temple of Bishessur...Mr. Lind called on the Rajputs in the city to prevent the insult to their faith. So the Mussulmans retired peacefully."

The communal hatred led to ugly communal riots in many parts of U. P. Green Flag was hoisted and bloody wars were fought between the Hindus and Muslims in Sirsa, Budaon, Shahjahanpur, Bareilly, Bijnor, Moradabad and other places where the Muslims shouted for the revival of the Muslim kingdom. Two famous Hindu places of pilgrimage, Haridvar and Kanakhal, were mercilessly sacked. Such communal feelings were not, of course, universal, but it is clearly proved by the Proclamations and Hindu-Muslim riots that they largely prevailed in U. P., the only Province in which the outbreak developed into a general revolt. Even the mass revolt in U. P. can, therefore, be scarcely regarded as a national war of independence.

The communal feeling was not the only obstacle to the solidarity of a national spirit. There was racial animosity produced by historical causes. It was most clearly manifested in the suspicion and jealousy, if not positive hatred, between the Muslims on the one hand and the Marathas and the Sikhs on the other.

This racial feeling was certainly shared by the Sikhs. The proclamation of Bahadur Shah as Emperor alienated them as they naturally interpreted it as the restoration of the rule of the Muslims from whom they had suffered so much in the past. It is on record that high British officials in the Panjab successfully persuaded the Sikhs to cast in their lot with them by describing in vivid language the injuries and insults they had suffered in the past in the hands of the Mughal Emperors. Having impressed

this point on tneir minds they held out before them the grand opportunity they now had of taking full vengeance. There can be hardly any doubt that the Sikhs were largely influenced by such considerations in offering their whole-hearted services to the British Government.

There are good grounds to believe that the same spirit alienated the Rajputs and the Marathas, as they, too, for historical reasons, did not favour the restoration of the Muslim rule. This view is supported by the conduct of Nana Sahib, first in inducing the sepoys not to proceed to Delhi,[113] and then in proclaiming himself as the Peshwa. It is also to be noted that none of the Rajput and Maratha Chiefs responded to the invitation of Bahadur Shah, and all the propaganda in Maharashtra was carried on in the name of Nana.

These considerations as well as the fact that by far the greater part of India was free from any overt act of hostility against the British Government, divest the outbreak of 1857 of a national character. We may now proceed to discuss whether it can be regarded as a war of national independence even though restricted to a limited area. In order to reply to this question it is necessary to have a clear and definite understanding as to the precise meaning of the phrase 'war of national independence.' There are not a few who seem to think that any fight by any group of Indians to drive away the British must be regarded as a struggle for national independence. The validity of this contention may be easily tested by the two specific instances of the grim and prolonged struggle carried on against the British by the Pindaris and the Wahabis in the nineteenth century. There is no doubt about the severity of the struggle against the English in each case, backed by an organization to which the outbreak of 1857 could lay no claim. Yet, it would be absurd to maintain that the Pindaris fought for independence of India. As to the Wahabis, they fought heroically

against the English with a grim determination to drive them out of India in order to establish a *dar-ul-Islam* or 'Kingdom of the Muslims'. The leader of the movement appealed to Muslim powers outside India to help him in his war of liberation against the 'Firangi and Indian infidels."[114] The Wahabis therefore began to fight against the Sikhs with this object, and when the British conquered the Panjab from the Sikhs, they simply transferred their hostility against the new power. Now, if we regard their fight against the English as war of independence, by no logic can we withhold this nomenclature from their fight against the Sikhs. In other words, we are reduced to the absurd position of regarding a war against the Sikhs (and the Hindus) of India as a war for independence of India.

These two examples serve to show that merely a fight against the English, even with the distinct object of driving them away, cannot be regarded as a war of Indian independence. The crucial point is the ultimate object with which such a fight is carried on, or rather the light in which the British are looked upon. It is clear that in the first case the Btitish merely consitituted a ruling authority, and the Pindaris would have fought in the same way against any Indian ruling power, if it stood in the way of their loot and plunder, as they did against the English.[115] In the second case the British were simply non-Muslims who had usurped the Muslim kingdom, and the Wahabis would, as they actually did, fight against any non-Muslim power in India with the same zeal as they showed against the English, if the security of religion demanded it.

Thus the fight of the Pindaris and the Wahabis against the English cannot be regarded as struggle for independence of India because to them the English stood as a symbol, either of ruling authority or of heretic religion, and not merely of an alien rule. In other words, they did not take up arms with the conscious and definite object of

freeing India from foreign rule, although their success might have led to that result. It is not the number that counts, but the spirit behind the struggle; the fight against England carried on by a small body of Irishmen, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, has been universally recognised as a war of independence.

An analysis of historical examples would thus prove that a struggle for independence must have as its primary object the expulsion of foreign rulers, simply because they are foreigners, though there are usually many grievances against them which rouse the spirit of the people and impel them to such a struggle.

In the detailed picture that has been given above of the 'popular upsurge', even in Rohilkhand and Avadh, two things emerge quite clearly. In the first place, it had nothing to do with the achievement of independence or freedom from British control, for that task was already accomplished by the mutinous sepoys. If there was any war, it was for maintaining and not gaining independence.

Secondly, during the period of independence, thus gained, there is unimpeachable evidence to show that the people were engaged in all kinds of subversive activities, and individuals, classes, and petty States were fighting with one another for their own interests. On the other hand, one looks in vain for such evidence as would show that the civil population realized the value and importance of the recovery of lost independence and made an organized and determined effort to maintain it by evolving a suitable plan for defence. Anyone with a modicum of knowledge and common sense should have realized that the avenging British forces were sure to come sooner or later to recover their lost dominions. But contemporary evidence leaves no doubt that many eminent leaders and local Chiefs, who had established their authority, discounted even the mere possibility of such a contingency.

It is also a very significant fact that all the Proclamations of the Muslim Chiefs in Avadh and Rohilkhand contain an appeal to the Muslims in the name of their religion, and remind them, on their faith in the Quran, that by fighting against the infidels or paying money to others to fight, they would secure to themselves eternal bliss after death. To the Hindus also the appeal was made in the name of their religion by pointing out how the British Government defiled it by introducing the remarriage of widows, the abolition of *Sati* etc. Even to the native rulers, after referring to the annexation of States, appeal was made in the name of religion. "Their designs for destroying your religion, O Rajas, is manifest.......Be it known to all of you, that if these English are permitted to remain in India, they will butcher you all and put an end to your religion."[116] The Proclamation issued at Delhi by the mutineers with the royal permission also stressed religion as the guiding force of he movement.

The idea of a common national endeavour to free the country from the yoke of the foreigners is conspicuous by its absence in these Proclamations. Indeed one could hardly expect such an idea in those days from people of this class.

There is thus no positive evidence in support of the view that people were inspired by a sense of patriotism to fight for retaining the freedom of the country which they had obtained so cheaply and unexpectedly without having to wage any war. It has been urged that the very fact that the people and the Chiefs fought heroically against the British when the days of retribution came proves that they fought for independence. But, as has already been pointed out above, mere fight against the British does not constitute a war of independence. One must look to the object of the fight. In the particular case before us the most obvious inference would be that the people fought for

retaining what they had wrongfully secured, or for avoiding chastisement, unless there is clear evidence to show that they were inspired by patriotism or any such noble and disinterested object. The protracted or heroic character of the resistance against the avenging British forces cannot, by itself, be regarded as such evidence. For the people had burnt their boats and had only two alternatives before them, —either to fight or to be prepared to lose everything, including their lives in many cases. Besides, the incredible and indiscriminate cruelty with which the masses were treated by the British must have told the people what to expect from them, and stiffened their back.

Until 1957, the view that the outbreak of 1857 was the first national war of independence in India rested generally on sentimental effusion and was not critically considered with reference to historical facts. In that year an eminent historian, Dr. S. N. Sen, has lent his qualified support to it. He observes:

"What began as a fight for religion ended as a war of independence for there is not the slightest doubt that the rebels wanted to get rid of the alien government and restore the old order of which the king of Delhi was the rightful representative".[117]

It is difficult to accept this view unless we believe that any fight against the English is to be construed as a war of independence,—a point that has already been discussed above. Besides, it is to be remembered that when the civil population began to fight against the English, Bahadur Shah had long been a prisoner in the hands of the British, and had even ceased to be a symbol.

Immediately after the sentence quoted above, Dr. Sen observes that "in Oudh the revolt assumed a national dimension", though he has been careful to add that the term 'national' "is to be understood in a limited sense, for the conception of Indian nationality was yet in embryo". The basis for

his view is his belief that "the patriots of Oudh fought for their king and country", although, as he admits, "they were not champions of freedom." Unfortunately, he did not develop this very important idea in the body of his book with full reference to facts and figures, but made this remark in the course of a brief review at the very end. In particular, he does not make it quite clear whether he regards the Chiefs and people of Avadh as patriots who fought for their king and country, or whether he regards as patriots only those who fought for their king and country. But then he does not give us any idea of their number. In any case, the main argument in support of this view seems to be the spirited reply of Muhammad Hasan to the letter of Sheikh Khairuddin.[118] Hasan maintained that the rebellion of the Chiefs and peoples of Hindustan "arose solely out of the annexation of Oude. Had that not taken place there would have been no bloodshed, because no defection of the Chiefs, who would have on the contrary inflicted chastisement on the sepoys". Later, Hasan maintained, that the servants and dependants of the king of Oude, among whom he included himself, looked upon the fight against the English as "essential to our prosperity in both worlds". But it is not easy to understand why the Chiefs and peoples of Hindusthan, living outside the dominion of Avadh, would find themselves in the same predicament. Such a general statement shows that Hasan assumed the outbreak of 1857 to be a war for independence of Avadh and not of India. But his generalisation, even if restricted to the Chiefs and people of Avadh, may justly be regarded as suspect. We know of another Chief, Beni Madho, who, when asked to surrender, agreed to evacuate the fort, presumably because he looked upon it as his property, but refused to surrender his person, as he was a subject of the Nawab of Avadh and not of the British Government. There is nothing to show how far these two repre-

sented correctly the views of the rebels as a body, or indeed of any one but themselves. But, besides these two personal statements there are no other facts or documents to prove that 'the patriots of Oudh' fought for their king and country. On the other hsnd, there are certain considerations which strongly militate against this view. Only a year before the Mutiny the King of Avadh was ignominiously driven from his country, but 'the patriots of Oudh' did not raise even their little finger on behalf of their king or country. Even if it be assumed that they had developed their love for their king and the country almost overnight, or that the Mutiny gave them an opportunity to display their loyalty and patriotism which they dared not show before, should not one expect to see them all flocking in a body to join the force of the Begam of Avadh and concert measures of defence without any other thought in their minds? But as shown above, this was far from being the case. By far the large majority of the people and Chiefs, formed into isolated groups, were busy securing their own interests, and even Hasan himself remained loyal and friendly to the English until, as he says, he received the peremptory command of his Chief. Many, if not most, of the Chiefs threw in their lot with the rebels only when the retreat of Havelock convinced them that the British *raj* was doomed.[119]

If one concedes the claim that 'the patriots of Oudh' fought for their king and country alone, they are automatically excluded from the general war of independence, if there were any, outside this area. As Muhammad Hasan clearly says: "My business is with the King of Oude". As regards Rohilkhand, the only other prominent area affected by the revolt, Dr. Sen himself admits[120] that the "masses in the district (of Bijnor) were not behind the revolt, and the movement there had degenerated into communal strife. Moradabad, for all practical purposes, was under the

control of the loyal Nawab of Rampur. Even in the rest of the province the new regime was not popular". Dr. Sen emphasizes the fact that the recruits of the rebel Chief, Khan Bahadur Khan of Bareilly, "were attracted by prospects of employment and had no enthusiasm for any particular cause. Thousands of poor people flocked to the British camp for the same reason. The common folk went whereever they could find employment". The state of things in the North-Western Provinces, as a whole, as described by him, was not much different and Bihar was very slightly affected. This detailed analysis as well as that of other parts of India,[121] hardly supports his general conclusion about the war of independence. He contends "that only a determined minority takes an active part in a revolt or revolution", and further, that if such minority is backed by the sympathy of a substantial majority the outbreak may "claim a national status." But he himself adds that such general sympathy was lacking "outside Avadh and Shahabad."[122] The case of Avadh has already been discussed. Shahabad is too small an area to decide the question one way or the other.

It would thus appear that the outbreak of the civil population in 1857 may be regarded as a war of independence only if we take that term to mean any sort of fight against the British. But in that case, the fight of the Pindaris[123] against the English and the fight of the Wahabis against Sikhs in the Panjab should also be regarded as such. Those who demur to it should try to find out how much the rebels in 1857 were prompted by motives of material interest and religious considerations which animated, respectively, the Pindaris and the Wahabis, and how much by the disinterested and patriotic motive of freeing the country from the yoke of foreigners. Apart from individual cases, here and there, no evidence has yet been brought to light which would support the view that the patriotic motive of freeing

the country formed the chief incentive to the general outbreak of the people. It is therefore difficult to regard the outbreak of 1857 as a war of independence, far less a national movement of this type, at least in the present state of our knowledge.

In conclusion, attention may be drawn to the rebellion of Surendra Sai at Sambalpur in 1827 and that of the Santals in 1856.[124] If the later rebellion of the same Surendra Sai in 1857 for the same cause and carried on in the same manner, may be regarded as a war of independence, there is no reason why the earlier rebellion should not be honoured by the same epithet. As regards the Santal rebellion, it would bear comparison with that of Shahabad in 1857-8, as regards the intensity of anti-British spirit, organization, and geographical area. If, therefore, the isolated outbreaks in 1857 in different areas are to be regarded as wars of independence, it is difficult to deny the same honour to the arduous struggle carried on by the Santals or Surendra Sai, and perhaps many others described in Chapter VI. The outbreak of 1857 has, therefore, little claim to be hailed as the first war of independence.

On the whole it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the so-called First National War of Independence in 1857 is neither First, nor National, nor a War of Independence.

VI. THE CAUSES OF THE OUTBREAK

A. MUTINY OF THE SEPOYS

The successful mutiny of the sepoys was the precursor of the revolt of the civil population. If there were no mutiny, there would have been no revolt. It is, therefore, necessary to find out, first, the causes of the mutiny of the sepoys.

Mention has been made above of the grave discontent and disaffection towards the British rule among all classes

of people. There is no doubt that the sepoys were largely affected by them. But in addition there were special grievances felt by the sepoys, as described above. It has also been shown how they gave public exhibition of their strong resentment and disaffection, and not infrequently local units broke out into mutiny".[125]

The sensitiveness of the sepoys to their religious beliefs and practices and the dread of conversion to Christianity worked as a nightmare upon their minds. Several mutinies were caused by such apprehensions, however ill-founded they might be. There can be hardly any doubt that this was the most potent cause of distrust and discontent. In 1856, one year before the Mutiny, the annexation of Avadh served as another serious cause of discontent. The sepoys, who were mostly recruited from Avadh, were provoked, beyond measure, by the unjust and forcible seizure of the State in violation of treaty rights and considerations of equity, long-standing alliance and never-failing loyalty.

Since the mutiny of 1857 there have been long discussions and much speculation regarding its causes. Among the numerous statements that have appeared regarding the discontent and disaffection of the sepoys, special importance attaches to those of contemporaty native officers of the British army. We possess a long memorandum on this subject prepared by Shaikh Hidayat Ali, Subadar and Sirdar Bahadur, Bengal Sikh Police Battalion, which was commanded by Captain T. Rattaray. It is dated 7th August, 1858, and was submitted to the Government of India. Hidayat Ali laid stress on the following as causes of discontent among the sepoys:

1. The sepoys were highly indignant at the annexation of Avadh to which Province many of them belonged.

2. When recruiting sepoys after the annexation of the Panjab, the Government promised both the Sikhs and Muslims that they would not be asked to remove their

beard or hair. But, later on, orders were passed for removing them, and those who refused to do so were dismissed.

3. The messing system in jails, forcing the *purdah* ladies to go to the newly built hospital at Shaharanpur, and the general missionary propaganda created alarm and suspicion. The sepoys thought that the missionaries would not have dared to preach such things as giving up *purdah*, early marriage, circumcision, etc., without the consent of the Government.

4. This suspicion was confirmed by the issue of a general order in September, 1856, to the effect that all new recruits must take an oath that they would be prepared to go wherever they were required.

5. Lastly came the greased cartridge which convinced them that the Government was determined to make them lose caste and embrace Christianity.

Aceording to Hidayat Ali, the grievances of the sepoys might be be divided into three categories, *viz*., political or sentimental (No. 1), material (non-payment of extra allowances), and religious (Nos. 2-5). Without minimising the importance of the first two, he leaves no doubt that the main cause was the religious. A vague dread that the Government was determined, by hook or by crook, to convert the Indians, both Hindus and Muslims, to Christianity, had pervaded all ranks of society and the sepoys fully shared this apprehension with the rest. Today we smile at this, for we know that nothing was further from the mind of the Government than such a thought. But the men of 1857 did not know what we know today, and we must judge their actions by what they actually felt, whether there were sufficient and reasonable grounds for such feelings or not. Anyone who carefully reads the accounts of those times will be convinced, not only about the actuality of such fears in the minds of all alike, but, what is more important, also that there were goods grounds for such apprehension,

The aggressive attitude of the Christian missionaries in Calcutta, in matters of proselytisation, had been frequent subjects of complaint even by the most learned and aristocratic citizens, and they had seriously to think of suitable means to stop it. The less educated classes not only took their cue from them but were further moved by the new legislations prohibiting *sati* or burning of widows, legalisation of the remarriage of widows, as well as open and unchecked denunciation of their cherished social usages and customs in most violent language, and filthy abuses of their gods and goddesses by bands of Christian missionaries. The opening of western education for girls was regarded as an instrument by which the missionaries could invade their zenana, the natural citadel of their orthodoxy.

The teaching of Christian doctrines was made compulsory in the girls' schools specially founded by them. That the main object of these missionaries was to use these schools as means of preaching Christianity will be clear from the following passage in the proceedings of one of these sehools : "Some others now engaged in the degrading and polluting worship of idols shall be brought to the knowledge of the true God and Jesus Christ".

Referring to the names of girls such as Vishnupriya, Annapurna, Digambari, Golakmani *etc.*, the following observations are made: "What kind of conduct ought we to expect from these poor children, named by their parents after imaginary goddesses, whose adultery, cruelty and gratification of their passions, as detailed dy their own sacred writing, are so abominable ?[126]

Even early in the nineteenth century there was a strong feeling and also a considerable amount of agitation against what the Hindus regarded as conversion to Christianity by force or fraud, and a memorial was sent by the Hindu community against Christian missionaries as well as highly placed English officials, including a Governor. That such

apprehensions were not altogether unfounded are proved by a minute recorded by the Governor of Madras in which he draws attention to the importance of converting the Hindus and Muslims to Christianity.[127]

It is also proved by a series of letters written and widely distributed by Mr. Edmond. These letters were addressed generally to the public, but particularly to those holding respectable appointments in the service of the State. The purport of these letters was that as all India obeyed one Government—as all parts of the country kept up constant cemmunication one with the other by means of the electric telegraph,—and as the Railway systems united the different extremes of this great peninsula, it was necessary that there should be but one religion also, and proper, therefore, that everyone should embrace Christianity.[128]

Its effect is thus described by Syed Ahmad : "These letters so *terrified* the natives that they were as people struck blind, or from under whose feet the ground had suddenly slipped away. All felt convinced that the hour so long anticipated had at last arrived, and that the servants of the Government first, and then the whole population would have to embrace Christianity. No doubt whatever was entertained as to these letters having been forwarded by the orders of the Government."[129]

The strong dislike of missionary activities and the grave apprehension of mass conversions of the Hindus and Muslims to Christianity, which the sepoys shared with the general public, were specially brought home to them by missionary propaganda within the military cantonments. Lt. Col. Wheler, the Commanding Officer of a sepoy regiment at Barrackpur, used to distribute religious tracts among the sepoys and openly addressed them with a view to proselytise. He is also known to have met the sepoys at his *bungalow* and tried to persuade them to accept Christianity. The activities of Wheler brought home to the

minds of the sepoys the grave and imminent peril which threatened their religion.[130] And this feeling worked upon minds thoroughly disaffected against the British for many years past. A discerning eye could see that the mine was loaded and the train prepared, and the spark might be easily furnished by any inflammable passion.[131] The story of the greased cartridge supplied the spark and caused an explosion which shook the British Empire in India to its very foundation.

There is hardly any doubt that the story of the greased cartridge was not only the apparent, but also the real, cause of the Mutiny.[132] All available evidence indicates that it had a tremendous repercussion on the sepoys scattered over this vast country. The story spread like wildfire and produced excitement and consternation all over the sepoy world. There is no doubt that letters were exchanged between sepoys, widely separated in localities far distant from one another. Many of these letters, intercepted by the Government, indicated a strong belief on the part of the sepoys that it was a deliberate device adopted by the Government to destroy their religion, and a grim determination to resist it even at the cost of their lives.

In judging the effect of the story of greased cartridges on the minds of the sepoys, and the justice or reasonableness of their obstinate refusal to use them, we must remember the very essential fact, often ignored, that the story was undoubtedly a true one. The Government as well as the high military officials denied the allegation that the cartridges were prepared with any objectionable materials, but the sepoys refused to believe them. It is now definitely proved that the sepoys were right, and the military officers undoubtedly suppressed the truth,—whether deliberately or through ignorance, it is difficult to say.

In a book entitled *"Mutiny of the Bengal Army"*, written by a military official in India immediately after

the Mutiny, we read : "The Enfield Rifle required a particular species of cartridge which was greased with lard made from the fat either of hog or ox"[133] Field-Marshal Lord Roberts states that "the recent researches of Mr. Forrest in the record of the Government of India prove that the lubricating mixture used in preparing the cartridges was actually composed of the objectionable ingredients, cow's fat and lard."[134]

Reference may be made in this connection to a letter written on March 23, 1857, by Anson, the Commander-in-Chief at the time of the Mutiny, to Lord Canning. "I am", says he, "not so much surprised at their (sepoys') objections to the cartridges, having seen them. I had no idea they contained, or rather are smeared with, such a quantity of grease, which looks exactly like fat".[135] When the sepoys were forced to taste this abhorrent mixture, it is hardly a wonder that they broke into mutiny. Lecky has very properly observed that "English writers must acknowledge with humiliation that if mutiny is ever justifiable, no stronger justification could be given than that of the Sepoy troops".[136] Though many eminent British officials have admitted that the cartridge question was the immediate cause of the Mutiny, others have sought to cloud the real issue by bringing forward other factors. Some have stressed the defects in the military organisation such as the relaxed discipline, lack of intimate personal touch between the sepoys and their officers, the considerable curtailment of the power of the latter over the former due to recent change of regulation, removal of regimental officers to staff and civil employment, the paucity of European troops, the new system of the recruitment of sepoys by which each regiment was filled in with the members of a few families, and the inferior and humiliating position of the sepoys and their native officers. Some have regarded the sepoys as mere tools of reactionary Brahmans and designing poli-

ticians; others have laid emphasis on the annexation of Avadh. All these and other causes of discontent, mentioned above, were undoubtedly contributory causes that facilitated the outbreak, but it may be reasonably doubted whether there would have been a general mutiny, if there were not the question of greased cartridges.

B. REVOLT OF THE CIVIL POPULATION

There is a French proverb that if you want to seize a murderer look for the woman behind the crime. Similarly if you want to go to the root of a revolt, look for the elements of discontent and disaffection among the people. These have been described in detail in Chapter V. It is not necessary in the present context to discuss whether or how far the discontent was reasonable and justified. But that it was genuine and profound is proved by a deep-seated hatred against the British among nearly all classes of people. Many Englishmen could discern this long before 1857. Bishop Heber wrote in 1824 that the "natives of India do not really like us......if a fair opportunity be offered, the Mussalmans, more particularly, would gladly avail themselves of it to rise against us".[137] The Government seems to have been fully aware of this fact, for Lord William Cavendish-Bentinck, the Governor-General of India, in a minute dated 13 March, 1835, refers to the peril of the British Government in India "when one hundred millions of people are under the control of a Government which has no hold whatever on their affections".[138] Many other Englishmen have testified to this state of feeling from their own experience and observation. Nothing perhaps illustrates this spirit of hatred better than the following story recorded by Mrs. Coopland. "An Officer, when trying the prisoners, asked a sepoy why they killed women and children. The man replied; 'When you kill a snake, you kill its young' ".[139]

But neither discontent nor hatred, by itself, normally leads to an outbreak. A suitable opportunity is necessary for their manifestation in overt acts. Such an opportunity presented itself when the sepoys, the chief prop of the British power in India, openly broke out into mutiny and seemed to hold their ground against their late masters. It was not *till then* that all the latent or pent-up feelings could be canalised into revolutionary activities by local leaders to serve their own interests.

That the course of events actually followed the line implied in this supposition has been made abundantly clear in Section II. Thus the successful mutiny of the sepoys may be looked upon as the direct and proximate cause of the revolt of the people. The elements of discontent and various other so-called causes[140] were merely the conditions favourable to the origin of the revolt; in other words, they made the revolt not only a possibility but a very probable contingency. Some of these conditions were also conducive to the development and temporary success of the revolt. They not only sustained the movement but supplied the dynamic force to its progress.

Among these contributing causes or favourable conditions emphasis has justly been laid by contemporary and later writers upon the dread of a mass conversion of both Hindus and Muslims to Christianity, It has already been pointed out, that the Indians had very reasonable grounds for such a fear, and that they were very seriously perturbed by the dreadful prospect. Almost all the Proclamations which were issued by the rebellious Chiefs lay special emphasis on this point, and the action of the sepoys shows the extent to which it must have affected the minds of all classes of Indians. Even if we admit that there were designing persons who acted upon this fear of the public to serve their own personal or political ends, we indirectly acknowledge the truth of the view that the fear of losing

caste and religion was one of the most potent factors in the general revolt of the civil population. As mentioned above, the material grievances under which the people smarted and the hope of material gain served as a great incentive. The noble and patriotic idea of securing freedom from alien rule might have inspired a few individuals, but there is no reason to suppose that it served as an incentive to the people at large. It should be remembered that the idea of patriotism and nationalism in the sense in which they are used now were conspicuous by their absence among the Indian masses in 1857.

VII. THE CAUSES OF FAILURE

Whatever one may think of the nature of the outbreak in 1857, there is no doubt that it constituted a grave peril for the British dominion in India. The sepoys, trained and equipped by British Officers, exceeded the European soldiers in numerical strength in proportion of seven to one. The sudden and unexpected rising of the sepoys forced the British officials, civil and military, to leave Avadh and Rohilkhand which passed almost entirely out of British control. The civil population of a wide-spread region also rose in revolt. Almost everything was in favour of the Indians. The British Government in India could not hope to muster, by all possible endeavours, and within a reasonable period, more than a combined force of Europeans and Indians, which in any case would be far inferior in number to the opposing sepoys. Even within this tiny force of the Government, the allegiance of a large element of Indians was at best doubtful. Further, while the Indian forces gained accession of strength by fresh mutinies and outbreaks following one another in rapid succession, the British authorities had their meagre resources crippled by the constant endeavour to keep in check the prospective mutineers, and their plans and schemes were foiled by

fresh mutinies and outbreaks cropping up at unexpected places. It was a very difficult task for them to maintain communication with distant centres, as the people of the intervening regions, or at least some sections of them, were often openly hostile. The triumph of the British in the face of all these handicaps is indeed a great marvel, and it is, therefoie necessary, to inquire into the causes for the failure of the revolution.

The most important cause was the lack of a general plan and a central organization guiding the whole movement. A number of isolated outbreaks without any link or common plan between them could hardly succeed against the British forces, directed with a strong will and determination by a central organization which could command the resources of India, and later, of Britain.

Nothing illustrates more forcibly the great contrast between the unity of command on the side of the British, and the utter lack of it on the other side, than the successful relief of Kanpur and recovery of Lakhnau by the British, and the lack of any effort to relieve the siege of Delhi by Nana or any other leader. It is admitted on all hands that Delhi could not have been captured by the British without the constant flow of men and epuipment from the Panjab; yet the only communication between the Panjab and Delhi was along a narrow track to the north-west of Delhi running along the border of U. P., the region most affected by the revolutionary spirit. If there were a well-knit organisation in U. P., not to speak in India as a whole, or some able military leader in this region, serious efforts would have been made to intercept the flow of men and equipments from the Panjab to Delhi. But very little was done in this respect. The same thing may be said of British troops coming from Calcutta to relieve Kanpur, Lakhnau, Allahabad etc.

The inferiority in generalship, strategy, military skill

nda discipline of the mutineers was another important cause of the failure of the outbreak. It is only necessary to contrast the siege of Delhi with that of Kanpur, Lakhnau, and Arrah to prove this point. Delhi was a walled city with good fortifications, and was defended by a large army, fully equipped, and with free access to the outside territory. Yet it fell after a siege of four months. At Kanpur about four hundred English fighting men took shelter in an improvised camp with weak entrenchment hastily thrown up. The besieging army, on the other hand, numbered some three thousand trained soldiers. But Nana, who is credited with great leadership and organizing ability, failed to reduce the place even in twenty days. At Arrah the small garrison of 50 Sikhs and 18 Europeans defended themselves in a small building, originally intended for a billiard room, and held out against the attack of Kunwar Singh at the head of 'some two thousand sepoys and a multitude of armed insurgents, perhaps four times the number of the disciplined solidiery." The successful resistance of the garrison at the Residency in Lakhnau, against enormous odds and for a long period, has been described above.

The stout and heroic resistance of Lakhnau offers a sad contrast to that of Jhansi and Gwalior. Raference has been made above to the fall of the strong fort of Jhansi in 15 days in spite of the disparity in number between the besieged and besieging forces. It is very surprising indeed that while Tantia, at the head of 22,000 men, attacked the besieging British army of about 2000 from the rear, and the major part of this small force was engaged in fighting with him, the troops inside the fort, more than 10,000 in number, did not make a sortie and try to destroy the small army, less than a thousand in number, left before the fort. One wonders what more favourable situation than this could offer to the besieged for ultimate success

against the British or as a means of immediate relief. The fort of Gwalior, renowned for its natural strength, was captured by assault in a single day.

What was true of defensive war proved to be equally true in the case of pitched battles. This was well illustrated in the battles for Delhi. The successive victories of Havelock on his way from Allahabad to Kanpur reveal also in a striking manner the superior skill and morale of the British troops.

The strength and weakness of the Indian leaders are best illustrated by the campaigns of the Rani of Jhansi and Tantia after the fall of Jhansi, which has been described in detail above. In spite of successive defeats, the Rani and Tantia conceived the bold plan of seizing the fort of Gwalior. It was a master stroke of strategy, the best that the Indian leaders showed during the whole campaign. But though they easily seized Gwalior with the help of Sindhia's troops who deserted their master in the battlefield and joined them, the failure to take proper measures to arrest the progress of the British army showed a deplorable lack of military skill. The surrender of such a strong fort, practically without any resistance, can only be described as ignominious.

The Indians, no doubt, scored some little success now and then, mainly due to their superior number and tactical advantage. Illustrations are afforded by the reverses sustained by the small reconnoitring forces of Lawrence at Chinhut near Lakhnau and the troops of Dunbar at Arrah, as well as the defeat of Windham at Kanpur. Both Kunwar Singh and Tantia Topi also displayed skill and energy, specially in guerilla warfare. But taking into consideration not only the episodes referred to above, but also the military campaigns as a whole, it seems to be quite clear that the Indian sepoys, bereft of their European Officers, were no match for the British troops, either European or Indian.

The failure of the outbreak may also be attributed to the fact that neither the leaders, nor the sepoys and the masses, were inspired by any high ideal. The lofty sentiments of patriotism and nationalism, with which they are credited, do not appear to have had any basis in fact. As a matter of fact, such ideas were not yet familiar to Indian minds. A strong disaffection and hatred towards the English, and hopes of material gain to be accrued by driving them out, were the principal motives which inspired and sustained the movement. The spirit of defending religion, which kindled the fire, soon receded into the background, and though it formed the slogan or war-cry for a long time, a truly religious inspiration was never conspicuous as a guiding force of the movement. On the other hand, the British were inspired by the patriotic zeal for retaining their empire and profoundly moved by the spirit of revenge against the Indians who had murdered their women and children.

Finally, the failure of the great outbreak was chiefly due to the absence of a great leader, who could fuse the scattered elements into a consolidated force of great momentum, with a definite policy and plan of action. History shows that genuine national movements have seldom failed to throw up such a leader in the course of their progress, not unoften even from the most unexpected quarter. Unfortunately, no such leader arose in India during the great outbreak of 1857-8. The truth of this is often obscured by the fact that some striking personalities, who took a prominent part in the movement of 1857-8, have been mistaken for such national leaders. Some of them are now regarded as martyrs and heroes, and posterity has endowed their memory wtth a glamour which is steadily on the increase. It is the painful duty of a sober historian to debunk them from the high pedestal which they have occupied for a century.

Nana Sahib, Bahadur Shah, Rani Lakshmibai of Jhansi and Kunwar Singh are popularly regarded as great leaders of the 1857 movement. Of these the first, though best known and most talked of, seems to be the least deserving of the high honours usually bestowed upon him. As we have already seen, there is nothing to show that he organized a great political movement, and even if he attempted to do so, he achieved no conspicuous success. As a military commander he was an absolute failure, as was proved by his inability to overthrow the tiny garrison at Kanpur and defeat in the hands of Havelock near the city. The part he played in dissuading the sepoys from proceeding to Delhi, and his subsequent activities indicate his narrow and selfish outlook and vainglorious attitude. On the whole there is nothing in the life and death of Nana Sahib which entitles him to the rank of a hero, a martyr, or a great leader. Enough has already been said of Bahadur Shah to indicate that he was even worse than Nana and not only absolutely worthless, but also a traitor to the cause he professed to serve. There is, however, one common point to be considered about them. Greatness was thrust upon them, and they had to accept it much against their will. This is certainly true in regard to Bahadur Shah, and probably true also of Nana. That might soften one's judgment about them, but does not take away from their lack of qualification as leaders.

The Rani of Jhansi undoubtedly stands on a far different footing. Once she decided to rise against the English she showed unbounded energy and resolution, combined with heroism and daring which we miss in Nana. But we cannot regard Rani Lakshmibai as having organized the great revolt, or played the part of its leader. Her activities were confined to a narrow area and a very brief period, towards the end of the movement. Even then she achieved no conspicuous success against the British on the

battlefield, and cannot be said to have contributed, in any substantial measure, to the cause of the Indians. Her title to fame rests more upon her personal character than upon her outstanding position as a great political or military leader.

The position of both Kunwar Singh and Tantia Topi is analogous to that of the Rani of Jhansi. They obtained more success against the English in the battlefield and carried on a more vigorous and prolonged campaign. But their activities also were confined within narrow limits, and none of them has any claim to be regarded as a national leader in any sense of the term. Nor had they contributed anything substantial to shaping the general course of the great movement.

The most glaring fact to be noted in this connection is that though the revolt was most widely spread in Avadh, there was not a single leader who exercised any control over the vast scattered forces, or had any voice in shaping the general course of the great movement. Neither Maulavi Ahmadulla nor the Begam of Avadh, nor any of the heroic *Talukdars* or Chiefs can really claim such a position.

But even though, for reasons aforesaid, the great outbreak of 1857 ended in failure, it would be a mistake to minimise its importance, or underrate the gravity of its danger to the British. In spite of all their defects and drawbacks, the sepoys and Indian rebels, by their very number and favourable situation, thereatened to destroy the whole fabric of the British empire. Its fate hung on a thread as it were, and it was almost a touch and go. Some native rulers were sitting on the fence, and would have probably cast in their lot with the sepoys at the first favourable opportunity. In other cases, mere accident or personal factors retained powerful Indian Chiefs on the British side. If fortune had been a little more favourable

to the Indian cause, the result might have been very different. It is idle to indulge in such speculations, but neither the British Government in India nor the British people ever minimised the danger with which they were faced. We may illustrate this by a quotation from the writings of a contemporary Englishman who probably reflected the general feeling in respect of what might have easily happened:

"Nothing but the insurrection of Salar Jung could prevent an outbreak in Hyderabad. The discovery of the plot at Nagpur at the eleventh hour showed how ripe this state was for revolt. The Mussalmans of Triplicane were only awaiting signal of rising at Hyderabad, and there is general feeling that if Hyderabad had risen we could not escape insurrection practically over the whole of Deccan and Southern India. Similarly, the situation would have been very critical if there were no friendly ruler in Nepal. Lastly we must also acknowledge with thankfulness the debt we owe to the educated natives."[141] Even Lord Canning, the Governor-General, is reported to have said that "if Sindhia joins the rebels I will pack off tomorrow."

A perusal of the contemporary records, both in India and England, leaves no doubt that the outbreak of 1857 was regarded by the people and statesmen in England, and even in foreign countries, as a grave peril to the British domination in India.

Reference may be made in this connection to the following extract from Lawrence's minute, dated April 19, 1858: "Many thoughtful and experienced men now in India believe that it has only been by a series of miracles that we have been saved from utter ruin. It is no exaggeration to affirm that in many instances the mutineers seemed to act as if a curse rested on their cause. Had a single leader of ability arisen among them, nay, had they followed any other course than that they did pursue in many ins-

tances, we must have been lost beyond redemption. But this was not to be."[142]

The outbreak of 1857 would surely go down in history as the first great and direct challenge to the British rule in India, on an extensive scale. As such it helped the genuine national movement for the freedom of India from British yoke which started half a century later. The memory of 1857-8 sustained the later movement, infused courage into the heart of its fighters, furnished a historical basis for the grim struggle, and gave it a moral stimulus, the value of which it is impossible to exaggerate. The memory of the Revolt of 1857, distorted but hallowed with sanctity, perhaps did more damage to the cause of the British rule in India than the Revolt itself.

CHAPTER. VIII

ANTI-BRITISH OUTBREAKS AFTER 1858.

I. THE WAHABIS

The early history of the Wahabi movement up to the death of its founder, Saiyid Ahmad of Rai Bareilly (1786-1831), has been discussed above. He deliberately conceived the project of reviving the Muslim rule in India by fighting the infidel rulers, particularly the Sikhs and the English. He fell fighting against the Sikhs in 1831, but left a rich legacy of ideas and organization to his large number of disciples. His fundamental creed was that India being *dar-ul-harb* (enemy territory), it was incumbent upon the Muslims either to destroy the British power, or to migrate to some other Muslim country. His ultimate object was the liberation of India from the hands of the English and Indian infidels, which was an obligation of all Muslims. For this purpose he wrote to the Nizam of Hyderabad, and even to some Muslim rulers outside India, such as Prince Kamran of Herat and Amir Nasrullah, the King of Bukhara. He also approached the various Pathan tribes on the north-western frontier of India,[1] Although he did not achieve much success, his views spread very rapidly all over North India, and also in Hyderabad, where a brother of the Nizam became an ardent follower of the sect.

Saiyid Ahmad had set up a regular organization. He had appointed a number of *Khalifas* or spiritual Vicegerents, who not only kept alive the movement after the death of their leader, but even made it more vigorous within a short time. Taking advantage of the political

chaos in the Panjab after the death of Ranjit Singh in 1839, the Wahabis established their authority over a large extent of territory along the left bank of the Sindhu. But when the British established their authority in the Panjab in 1847, the Wahabis were driven away from the Panjab. Inayet Ali, one of the Patna *Khalifas*, "made vigorous preparations to carry out his long-cherished design of waging a war against the British. Circular letters were addressed to the Wahabi *Khalifas* to incite people to proceed to Mulka Sittana for *jihad*. Those persons who were not in a position to join in the holy war were recommended to resist passively and refrain from all intercourse with their *kafir* rulers,—to form as it were a power within Government and totally opposed to it.

"The preachers became active, particularly in Meerut, Bareilly, Delhi and in many districts of Bengal and Bihar. Rebellion was openly preached in Patna, where one of the leaders, Ahmadullah, had assembled 700 armed persons and was prepared to resist any investigations by the Magistrate. The police was said to be in league with the rebels. Sedition was preached among the native troops also.

"Inayet Ali, meanwhile, had been able to enlist the sympathy of Akhund of Swat and Saiyids of Sittana to his cause and made a spirited attack on the pro-British ruler of Amb, Jahandad Khan, who feigned submission but secretly applied for British help. In the encounter with the British (1853), the Wahabis suffered heavy casualties, their rear guard and its leader Karam Ali being cut to pieces. Inayet Ali escaped with great difficulty and henceforward adopted the policy of his brother to make suitable preparations before risking a fight with the trained British soldiers. Regular military training was imparted to the recruits and songs were recited extolling the glories of *jihad*. An expedition under Mirza Muhammad was successful in capturing the Yusufzai villages of Nawakela and Sheikhjana, but was

soon repulsed by the British forces. Inayet Ali next occupied Naringi, a border village within the British territory, but had to retreat under pressure to Chinghai and Bagh. Inayet Ali, with the help of frontier tribesmen, next made a night attack (October, 1857) on Lt. Horne, the Assistant Commissioner at Sheikhjana. The British camp was routed, and the party returned triumphantly with a large amount of booty which was distributed among the soldiers. While Inayet Ali was preparing for another campaign, the rising of 1857 broke out in full fury, and his communication with, and the source of supply from, Patna were cut off."[2]

It is not a little curious that this violently anti-British militant organization should have practically kept aloof from the great revolutionary movement of 1857. Some Wahabis were suspected to have carried on secret intrigues with the mutineers at Patna, and perhaps some individuals really sympathised with the movement of 1857. But the Wahabis, as a body, kept aloof from it. It was obvious that the strong military organization of the Wahabis at Sittana could have rendered great service to the cause of the Mutiny by attacking the British in the north-west, as that would have considerably hampered, if not altogether stopped, the constant flow of men and money from the Panjab to Delhi. The Wahabis actually carried on severe and sustained military operations in this quarter both before and after the Mutiny, but they kept quiet during the most eventful period of 1857-8. The only satisfactory explanation seems to be that the Wahabis favoured a purely Islamic movement and did not like to co-operate with the Hindus. This view is supported by the conduct of a number of individual Wahabis who joined the mutineers at Delhi. They printed and published a Proclamation, inviting all Mahomedans to arm and fight for their religion. A *futwa* was also published, declaring that it was the duty of all Mahomedans to make religious war, and that otherwise their families and

children would be destroyed and ruined."[3]

The Sittana camp was a source of chronic anxiety to the British. From 1850 to 1857, the British Government sent no less than "sixteen distinct expeditions aggregating 33,000 regular troops"[3a] to destroy the rebels and their allies, but with no great success. "An expedition had to be sent under Sir Sidney Cotton with 5,000 men in 1858 to chastise the rebels, and the Sittana lands were made over to the mountain tribes on condition that they would not allow the 'fanatics' to pass through their territory to commit depredations within the British frontier. Maqsud Ali died in 1861, and Abdullah, son of Vilayet Ali, succeeded him as leader of the Wahabis at Sittana. Abdullah vigorously pursued the anti-British campaign, urging the Muhammadans to leave the country and join the forces of Islam for the conquest of India. Ahmadullah, who managed the affairs in India, regularly sent up a large number of recruits and money to the distant Wahabi camp. Several tribes as well as the Akhund of Swat, who governed a population of one lakh, made a common cause with the Wahabis, who recovered their old settlement of Sittana in July, 1863. The Panjab Government in a note recorded its views that 'these fanatics were no harmless or powerless religionists; that they are a permanent source of danger to our rule in India.' The British Government sent several expeditions to crush the rebels, the most important of which was under the command of Sir Neville Chamberlain (October, 1863). The British army advanced into the Ambeyla Pass but it could not proceed as far as the Chumla Valley due to the stubborn resistance offered by the Wahabis and their allies. All British efforts to dislodge the rebels from their positions failed, and the British forces were repulsed with heavy casualties. The Wahabis even captured a picket and drove the British force back with a loss of 114 men, besides officers killed and wounded.

Subsequently, the Wahabis took another British picket which could only be retaken after a severe battle in which the British General was wounded. The situation became desperate for the British, and Chamberlain sent down a telegram asking for as many troops as could be spared. At this stage General Garvock took over the command and pushed forward at the head of 9,000 troops; he defeated the rebels near Laloo and again at the foot of the Bonair hills. The confederacy of the tribes was broken through diplomatic tactics which facilitated British advance to the rebel village of Mulka, 35 miles from Sittana, which was burnt down. According to Muslim chronicles, only two houses were actually burnt.[4] Between 1850 and 1863 no less than twenty separate expeditions, aggregating 60,000 regular troops, besides Irregular Auxiliaries and Police, were sent against the Wahabis.[4a]

The British Government then decided to strike at the root of the movement by prosecuting a large number of Wahabis in India who had been supplying sinews of war to the camp at Sittana. A number of Muslims were charged with the offence of attempting to wage war against the Queen or aiding and abetting it. There were State trials at Ambala (1864), Patna (1865), Malda (1870) and Rajmahal (1870), and many leading Wahabis were transported for life. In consequence of these trials and other circumstances, the Wahabi movement was thoroughly crushed in India.

The evidence produced in these trials revealed the nature of the Wahabi conspiracy against the British and left no doubt that the movement was much better planned and organized than the outbreak of 1857. With a missionary zeal which extorted admiration even from the hostile British writers, the *Khalifas* toured all over the country, enrolled followers, and appointed provincial and district agents to recruit men and collect money. A Central Com-

mittee was set up to supervise the whole operation, and there were also District Committees and permanent preachers. A wonderful system was evolved for the transmission of new recruits from Bengal to Sittana—a distance of about 2000 miles—without arousing suspicion of the British authorities. There was a regular arrangement for collecting taxes, and the money was remitted to Sittana by many clever devices. The uninterrupted steady flow of men and money from the eastern part of India, across its whole breadth to the N.W.F.P., at a time when the British authorities were vigilant in their watch against the Wahabi activities, indicates a highly developed organization to which there is no parallel in the history of the revolutionary movement against the British during the nineteenth century.

To the Wahabis belongs the credit for the first organized attempt on a large scale to drive out the English after they had established their paramountcy in India. The Wahabis are regarded by some as having waged the first War of Independence in India against the British. But it has certainly no claim to be called national in the sense in which we understand the term today. For it was a struggle for freedom, *of the Muslims*, and *by the Muslims*. The basis of the movement was religious rather than political, and its inspiration came from communal and not patriotic sentiments. It may be called the first war of independence *in* India, but not *of* India —independence of the Muslims *in India*, but not of the people *of India*. For, as shown above, the Wahabis fought for the establishment of *dar-ul-Islam* i.e. restoring the of Muslim sovereignty in India, not for setting up a Government in which all Indians would be treated as free citizens. The object of the founder, as mentioned above, was to liberate India from the English as well as other infidels. No wonder, the Hindus, as a body, kept themselves severely aloof from the long-drawn struggle.

The fraternity of Islam and the historical tradition

of Muslim suzerainty over India, within almost living memory, generated among the Indian Muslims a sort of national feeling which was conspicuous by its absence among the Hindus. It was therefore very natural that the national aspirations for freedom should first be awakened in the minds of the Muslims, who had so recently lost the power and prestige of a ruling race, and were reduced to the same rank as those whom they had hitherto regarded as their subjects and inferiors.

It is to be noted that the revolutionary spirit of the Wahabis did not leave any trace behind, and its memory did not inspire any anti-British movement among the Muslims in the twentieth century. So, even if we regard the Wahabi movement as a national war of independence from the Muslim point of view, it was merely a passing episode in the history of Indian Muslims, and not an early phase of the freedom movement among them.

II. OTHER DISTURBANCES.

Local, communal and even personal grievances, backed by religious frenzy, sometimes led to violent anti-British outbreaks. Such were the Kuka movement in the Panjab, the Birsa movement in Chotanagpur (Bihar), and the Naikda rising in Bombay. These have no real claim to be regarded as struggles for freedom, but there is a growing tendency to take them as such, like the local outbreaks in 1857.

A. THE KUKA MOVEMENT.[5]

The Kuka movement in the Panjab was started shortly before the British conquest of the Province, as an attempt to restore the purity of the Sikh religion. After the British conquest, Ram Singh, who became its leader in 1863, is said to have preached the revival of Sikh suzerainty by the overthrow of the British Government. He gave military training to his followers and organized the sect. There is, however,

no adequate evidence to support the view that the Kuka movement ever aimed at the subversion of the British rule. The main activities of the Kukas before 1871 were the destruction of idols and shrines, and the murder of butchers and others whom they suspected of killing kine. The failure of the British Government to enforce the prohibition of cow-slaughter, imposed by the Sikh Government, induced the Kukas to take law in their own hands, and several of them were hanged and transported. These provoked the Kukas to greater frenzy, and in January, 1872, a band of about 150, armed with axes, sticks etc. made sudden raids on Malaudh and Kotla, in course of which they killed 10 men and wounded 17, their own losses being 9 killed and 38 wounded. Sixty-eight Kukas were taken prisoners by the authorities of Patiala and handed over to Mr. Cowan, Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana. Without even the semblance of a trial, and in defiance of the order of the Commissioner, Cowan executed 49 of the captured men by blowing them from the guns. The rest were tried by the Commissioner and executed on the following day This ended the Kuka movement. Ram Singh, the leader of the Kukas, was deported to Rangoon and remained there as a State prisoner till his death in 1885.

B. THE BIRSA MOVEMENT.[6]

The Birsa movement may be regarded as belonging to the same category as the rising of the primitive tribes like the Kols and Santals to which reference has been made above. Shri Birsa of the Munda tribe, who was educated at Chaibassa and acquired some knowledge of English, started a puritan movement among the Mundas in 1895. His disciples grew in large numbers and looked upon him as a Prophet or incarnation of God. The British Government scented danger and regarded the movement as aiming at the overthrow of the British *Raj* and establishment of

Munda self-government. So Birsa was arrested while he was asleep, and he, with his fifteen followers, was stealthily removed to Ranchi. They were all sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for two years and a payment of fine. Being released from jail in January, 1898, Birsa renewed his old activities. The hostile attitude of the British Government to his humanitarian campaign of relieving the misery of the masses and securing justice to them, forced Birsa to organize a fighting force by means of effective training in use of bows, arrows and swords. It is said that in secret meetings during night, Birsa exhorted his followers to fight against those who were perpetrating injustice and oppression on them in various ways, with a view to establishing their own government. Either due to such incitements or to other causes, Birsa's followers made violent demonstrations by burning mission houses and other acts of rowdyism. Finally, on 7 January, 1900, a band of 300 Mundas, armed with bows, arrows, battle-axes, and spears, attacked the Khunti Police Station. The retaliation was swift and terrible. A large number of Mundas, including women and children and estimated at about 200, were killed, and even some wounded persons were alleged to have been buried alive. Birsa was captured on 3 February, but died of cholera in jail on 2 June, 1900. By a ruthless campaign of terror about 450 followers of Birsa were roundel up and the movement collapsed.

C. THE NIAIKDAS.[7]

In 1858 there was an unsuccessful insurrection of the Naikdas, a very wild forest tribe of Panch Mahals in Bombay, under Rupsingh. Ten years later he joined Joria who had set himself up as an incarnation of God and collected a large following. The two together established a court and began to collect revenue by way of religious gifts, fines, and transit dues. They made armed

raids upon Rajgad in the State of Bariya and Jethpur in Chhota Udepur. The Naikda risings were suppressed by a British force.

D. CONTINUATION OF OLDER REVOLTS.

As in the case of Savantvadi, mentioned above,[8] some anti-British outbreaks were legacies from the pre-Mutiny period and were caused by purely local or personal grievances without any religious background. The hill-tribes in Assam, who carried on prolonged hostilities against the British in the first half of the 19th century, continued them in the second half. There were risings of peasants of the Phulaguri area in the Nowgong District in 1861 as a protest against the prohibition of poppy cultivation and prospect of additional taxation. For similar reasons there were violent outbreaks in Jaintia Hills which were of a more serious nature and continued from 1860 to 1863. Hardly less serious were the series of riots in the plains of Assam during 1893-4, caused mainly by the high assessment of land revenue.[9]

Reference has been made above to the rebellion of Surendra Sai and his followers in Sambalpur from 1857 to 1864.[10]

BOOK II

THE INDIAN NATION IN MAKING.

CHAPTER I.

THE IMPACT OF WESTERN CULTURE.

I. THE NEW SPIRIT

It will appear from what has been said in Book I, Chapter II, that by the end of the 18th century when British rule was definitely established in Bengal, the political, social, and economic condition of the people had deteriorated to a considerable extent, while the mental and moral condition was marked by inertia and stagnation. In course of the next century there was a phenomenal progress in Bengal in every walk of life, except the material condition. It set up a high standard of rational thinking, leading to religious and social reforms which regenerated the whole of India. It developed an intellectual eminence which was at once the envy and despair of the rest of India. It created a literature, both in prose and poetry, which has taken its rank with the most developed literature of the modern world. It awakened a sense of Indian nationality and deep patriotic feelings such as India never knew before. Finally, it developed those political ideas and political organizations which led by a natural process of evolution to the freedom of India. In spite of the growing poverty of the masses there were such remarkable developments in religious, social, and political ideas, and wonderful growth in literature with a liberal outlook on men and things, broadened by a knowledge of the outside world, that it may be said without any exaggeration that Bengal had passed from the Medieval to the Modern age. More or less the same transformation took place almost throughout British India before the end of the nineteenth century.

The most important single factor that accounts for this great transformation is the impact of the West through the introduction of English education. It broke the barrier which had hitherto effectively shut India from the outside world and opened the floodgate of Western ideas.

In order to illustrate how the new spirit worked in the different fields of life it is necessary to give a brief account of the religious and social reforms, growth of literature and periodical press, and development in political ideas and organization.

II. RELIGIOUS REFORMS

1. THE BRAHMA SAMAJ.[1]

It is unnecessary for our present purpose to discuss the history of English education in India. It will suffice here to state that the establishment of the Hindu College in Calcutta in 1817 gave the first great impetus to English education in Bengal. The large number of schools and colleges in Bengal and other parts of India, founded during the next forty years, created an English-educated class, which was not numerically very strong but exerted considerable influence in giving a shape and form to the New India that was slowly emerging. The establishment of the three Universities of Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras in 1857, and of numerous colleges and schools affiliated to them, led to an almost phenomenal growth in the number of English-educated Indians. After the failure of the outbreak of 1857-8 they came to the forefront and it was under their leadership that India progressed in every walk of life.

The most important result of the impact of Western culture on India was the replacement of blind faith in current traditions, beliefs, and conventions—characteristic of the Medieval Age—by a spirit of rationalism which seeks to inquire and argue before accepting anything. The revolt of the mind against the tyranny of dogmas and traditional

authorities, beliefs and customs, is the first requisite for freedom of thought and conscience which lies at the root of progress in social, religious and political spheres of life. Indeed this is the reason why progress in all these different spheres is inter-dependent to a certain extent. In Bengal the rationalizing effect of English education at first manifested itself more in religious and social ideas, but it was not long before it profoundly affected also the political consciousness of the people. The Brahma Samaj was the outcome of the first two, and it has often been claimed that it has contributed largely to the ideals of political freedom. It would perhaps be more correct to say that all the three are the results of the same rationalistic urge which was created by Western culture. In any case, it is impossible to deny that these movements were linked together to a certain extent, and it is therefore necessary to give some account of the transformation of social and religious ideas before we go into details of the evolution of political ideas.

Raja Rammohan Roy was the first and the best representative of this new spirit of rational inquiry into the basis of religion and society. He challenged the current religious beliefs and social practices of the Hindus as not being in consonance with their own scriptures. He tried to show that the belief in multiplicity of gods and worship of images, which formed the essence of the current and popular Hindu religion, was opposed to the teaching of the Vedas. How far his views were historically correct, or morally sound, was of secondary importance. What really mattered was his open and public protest against the blind acceptance of whatever passed current on the authority of priesthood or its interpretation of scriptures. The standard of revolt he thus raised against the medieval tyranny of dogma unleashed forces which created what may be called Modern India, and makes him worthy to rank by the side of Bacon and Luther.

The Raja opposed the practice of the worship of images which formed an essential feature of Hindu religion since time immemorial. He looked upon this idolatry as a degeneration from the pure monotheistic doctrine of the Upanishads, and devoted his time, energy, and literary ability to the propagation of the monotheistic doctrine of the Hindu scriptures. His ideas were taken up by a number of English-educated persons with whose co-operation he established the 'Brahma Samaj' in 1828, and opened his Church on 23 January, 1830, before a gathering of 500. It did not belong to any particular sect but was a meeting ground for all those who discarded idolatry and worshippsd one true God.

The sole object of the Raja was to revive monotheism in India on the basis of the Vedanta; "his work was mainly negative and reformatory and not positive or constructive."[2] The Brahma Samaj was reduced to a moribund condition after the death of the Raja in 1833, but Devendra Nath Tagore (son of Dwaraka Nath and father of Rabindra Nath) infused new life into it.

The period berween 1850 and 1856 witnessed a tendency amongst the younger members "not only to broaden the basis of Brahmaism by advocating new social ideals, but also to apply the dry light of reason even to the fundamental articles of religious belief. They advocated female education, supported widow-remarriage, cried down intemperance, denounced polygamy, tried to rationalize Brahma doctrines and sought to conduct the affairs of the church on strictly constitutional principles."[3]

To this class belonged Keshab Chandra Sen who infused new life into the Samaj. An active spirit of social reforms was shown by celebrating inter-caste marriages and various other unorthodox practices. This created a definite split between the two sections. Keshab and his followers now seceded from the old party led by Devendra Nath and

formed a new organization called the 'Brahma Samaj of India' towards the end of 1866. Keshab made some singular contributions, directly to the growth of Brahmaism, and indirectly to the national life of India. He made renunciation of caste as essential to Brahmaism as the renunciation of idolatry. He did not subscribe to the view that Brahmaism was Hinduism, but regarded it as catholic and universal. He made Brahmaism a great force all over Bengal and was the first to inaugurate an all-India movement of religious and social reforms, by undertaking missionary tours to Bombay and Madras in 1864, and to North-West Provinces four years later.

He and his followers carried the message of Brahma Samaj all over India, and Brahma congregations were established in many intellectual centres, sometimes under different names, such as 'Prarthana Samaj' in Bombay and 'Veda Samaj' (later called 'Brahma Samaj') in Madras. It is interesting to note that this was the first all-India movement, which was a precursor of a similar movement undertaken a few years later by another Bengali, Surendra Nath Banerji. But while Surendra Nath worked for political reforms, Keshab's object was limited to religious reforms based on personal liberty and social equality and emancipation. As noted above, this might have indirectly influenced the ideas of political liberty. But Keshab deliberately eschewed politics; he and his followers "openly proclaimed loyalty to the British Government as an article of the creed of his Church".[4] This no doubt endeared him to the British Government which was ready to encourage freedom of thought, ideas of social revolt, reforms on modern lines, and even social revolt, so long as these did not touch upon the dangerous ground of politics. So Keshab was lionised both in India and England, and was openly hailed as a deliverer of his people by Lord Lawrence, the Viceroy.[5] Keshab's annual addresses at the Town Hall were att-

ended by the highest officials.[6] At his request, the Government of India passed a special legislation for legalising Brahma marriages which were not valid in the eyes of Hindu law as the idol of *Salagram* was not present in the ceremony and caste-rules were not followed in selecting brides and bridegrooms. But although Keshab eschewed politics and preached absolute loyalty to the British, and thereby gradually lost his popularity with the younger section imbued with advanced political ideas by Surendra Nath Banerji, there is hardly any doubt that he helped the cause of nationalism by the high status which was accorded to him by Englishmen, and by awakening a sense of Indian unity through religion.

But Keshab's leadership even in the Brahma Samaj did not last long. According to the well-known laws of revolution, younger men with still more radical views challenged the authority of Keshab and deserted him, as he had himself deserted Devendra Nath. They, too, like him, founded a new Church in 1878—the 'Sadharan Brahma Samaj'—,which is still the main organization of the Brahmas of Bengal.

We may now sum up the contributions made by the three great leaders to the gradual development of freedom of mind which, though manifested in religious and social reforms under their guidance, must have strong repercussions on the ideas of nationalism and movements for political regeneration.

The movement of Raja Rammohan Roy "could hardly be called a movement of religious and social revolt. While claiming the right of private judgment in the interpretation of ancient scriptures, the Raja never repudiated their authority ; nor did he, while seeking to assert the right of individual conscience to determine for itself waht was right or wrong, even repudiate the authority of that social conscience which spoke through ancient social laws and sanctified social traditions. He tried really to reconcile individual

reason with ancient scriptures and individual conscience with social authority."[7]

Thus though the Raja defied current Hindu religious and social customs he never ceased to regard himself as a Hindu, and died with the sacred thread of the Brahman on his body. He never dreamt of founding a separate sect, though the Brahma Samaj, founded by him for the non-sectarian worship of one true God, later developed into a sectarian body.

Maharshi Devendra Nath Tagore, who succeeded Rammohan as the head of the Brahma Samaj and was the real creator of it as a separate religious sect, 'proclaimed the freedom of reason from the bondage of ancient scriptural authority.' Keshab Chandra Sen, the next leader, proceeded a step further and asserted 'the absolute freedom of the individual conscience from the bondage of social customs and conventions.' 'The Raja's was not, strictly speaking, a movement of active revolt; Devendra Nath's was really a movement of religious revolt; Keshab Chandra's was a movement of social revolt'.[8] This prepared the ground for political revolt.

Although all the three branches of Brahma Samaj, referred to above, still exist, Brahmaism ceased to be a living force shortly after Keshab's death. It has become a kind of backwater of religious and communal life.

2. THE ARYA SAMAJ.[9]

The Brahma Samaj inspired similar or parallel movements in other parts of India. The most important of these is the Arya Samaj founded by Swami Dayananda Saraswati in 1875. He was born in 1824, in an orthodox Brahman family of Morvi State in Kathiawar Peninsula. He lost his faith in traditional religion while a boy of 14, took to an ascetic life, and wandered all over India. In 1875 he established the Arya Samaj in Bombay.

During the remaining eight years of his life Dayananda devoted himself to preaching his new gospel, writing books embodying his teachings, and organizing Arya Samajas throughout India. His mission proved very successful in the Panjab and, to a certain degree, also in U. P., Rajputana and Gujarat. But at the time of his death in 1883, the total membership of the Arya Samaj did not probably exceed twenty thousand. In the Census of 1891, it was less than forty thousand.

Dayananda believed, like Rammohan Roy, that the reform of Hindu society could only be effected by reviving Vedic rituals and institutions which had been hidden under the excrescences of the later Puranic age. So he adopted a programme of social reform. He rejected the hereditary system of caste and did not recognize the authority or even the superiority of the Brahmans merely on the ground of birth. He proclaimed the right of everybody to study the Vedas and other Hindu scriptures. He denounced the worship of gods and goddesses and preached that only the Supreme Being should be worshipped. Inter-caste marriage was encouraged and child-marriage was decried—the minimum marriageable age for boys and girls being fixed, respectively, at 25 and 16. Dayananda was, however, opposed to the remarriage of widows.

According to the first constitution of Arya Samaj the members "shall regard the Vedas alone as independently and absolutely authoritative." Two years later, in 1877, the creed was changed, and it was simply laid down that 'the Vedas are the books of true knowledge which the members should study.' In spite of this modification, the Vedas, as *interpreted by Dayananda* in his *Satyartha-prakash* and other books, remained the supreme and unfailing authority for the Arya Samajists. Dayananda's interpretation, which is supposed to contain all the truth, differs in many cases fundamentally not only from that of modern scholars

but also from the old commentaries of Sayana and Mahidhara, all of which he rejected and did not consider as binding on his followers. The psychology behind it and its object and result have been admirably explained by B. C. Pal.[10]

Dayananda found that both Christianity and Islam were making fatal inroads upon Hinduism, and this process of denuding Hindu society must be stopped by using their own weapons. Christian and Islamic Universalism is based upon the universality and infallibility of the Christian and Islamic scriptures, viz. the Bible and the Quran. The Hindus had nothing like this in ancient or medieval times, and Dayananda therefore set up Vedic infallibility as the counterpart of the infallibility of Bible and Quran. It was upon this infallibility of the Vedas that he wanted to build up the Hindu society and the Hindu nation inspired with a great mission among the peoples of the world. B. C. Pal made the following observations in this connection :

"It cannot be denied that the movement of Dayananda Saraswati, as organised in the Arya Samaj, has contributed more than the rational movement of the Raja's Brahmo Samaj to the development of a new national consciousness in the modern Hindu, particularly in the Punjab. This was really the beginning of that religious and social revival among the Hindus of India to which we owe so largely the birth of our present national consciousness".[11] This view has considerable force.

The strong urge of Dayananda to establish Hindu nationalism on a foundation of religious and social unity found a concrete expression in the Suddhi movement. This means the reconversion of those Hindus—millions in number—who had once been willingly or forcibly converted to other religions like Islam or Christianity, but were now willing to come back to the fold of Hinduism. Orthodox

Hinduism always barred its door against them. The Arya Samaj kept it wide open. As a matter of fact this aspect of the Arya Samaj excited the greatest interest in it among the people outside its own ranks. It was strongly resented by the Muslims and was a source of almost chronic feud between the two. At the same time the Suddhi was looked upon by the Arya Samaj as a potent instrument for effecting that religious, social, and political unity of India which came to be cherished as its great ideal.

Two distinctive features of the Arya Samaj are social services like famine-relief, and the spread of English education. The Dayananda Anglo-Vedic School at Lahore, soon developed into a college, had become the pattern of educational institutions maintained by the Arya Samaj. The D. A. V. (Dayananda Anglo-Vedic) College at Lahore had great achievements to its credit. Under Lala Hansraj, who remained its principal for 28 years, "it became the foremost agency for planting a sturdy independent nationalism in the Punjab".

3. REVIVALISM.

The Brahma Samaj and the Arya Samaj were both reformist in character, and sought to emphasize the essential principles of Hinduism by denouncing later accretions which formed the chief target of attack by Christian missionaries and followers of Islam. But the attitude of the Brahma Samaj and Arya Samaj, which discarded the Puranas and worship of images and were opposed to many time-honoured usages and traditions of orthodox Hinduism, provoked a strong reaction, which gathered force in the fourth quarter of the 19th century. Its principal characteristic was the glorification of Hindu religion and society in their current forms and a spirited defence of these, on modern lines, against hostile criticism by both Indian reformers and Christian missionaries. The best representative of what may

be called neo-Hinduism, in Bengal, was Bankim Chandra Chatterji, perhaps the greatest intellect and literary man of the period. He "openly attempted a re-examination, a re-interpretation and a re-adjustment of our old theology and ethics in the light of the most advanced modern thought and in accordance with the new rules of literary criticism and scriptural interpretation that had been so powerfully influencing current religious life and thought in Christendom itself."[12]

The truth of the theoretical speculations of Bankim was demonstrated by Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, the greatest saint of the 19th century. Both by precept and example of his own life Ramakrishna brought home to an incredulous world, held under the spell of natural science, the reality of spiritual life and of the means to attain it as described in ancient Hindu scriptures, both Vedic and post-Vedic. He held that not only all the different forms of Hindu religion, including the Purnanic and Tantric, but all religions, such as Islam and Christianity, are true in their essence and may lead to salvation, if properly pursued. This he demonstrated by himself practising with success the diverse modes of *sadhana* or spiritual discipline prescribed in the different religious cults mentioned above. He himself began and ended his life as the worshipper of the goddess Kali through her image in a temple at Dakshineshwar, near Calcutta. This took away the edge of the denunciation of orthodox Hinduism by Brahma and Arya Samajas as well as Christian missionaries and Muslim *maulavis*. Ramakrishna proved in his own life that the worship of Puranic deities through their images was as good a means of salvation as the worship of one God without any form. He gave a moral sanction, a philosophical basis and a new spiritual significance to the neo-Hinduism which laid the foundation of Hindu nationalism on a secure foundation. His ideas were preached

throughout India by his great disciple Swami Vivekananda.

The Theosophical Society also served the same end by upholding modern Hinduism in its orthodox form and giving a rational explanation of what were generally decried as its crudities and absurdities. Whatever might have been the real value of all these theosophical teachings strictly from religious or philosophical point of view, they gave an impetus to the development of Indian nationalism, as will be shown later.

III. SOCIAL REFORMS.

Rammohan inaugurated an era of social reform, concentrating his attention chiefly on the amelioration of the conditon of women. He made a cautious approach, basing his argument on scriptural authorlty ; he had an aversion to coercion or legislation for social reform, and would rather leave it to the growing good sense of the people themselves. To the young and ardent Keshab Chandra every social practice disapproved by reason must not be tolerated for a moment and be uprooted at any cost, if necessary by means of legislation. He had an all-embracing programme including, among other things, education of women and their gradual emancipation from all restraints, mass education through cheap newspapers, adult education by night schools, removal of caste distinctions, prohibition of drinking, and abolition of cruel rites and practices. The campaign of social reforms proceeded more or less along these lines, and the different approaches of Rammohan and Keshab Chandra also marked the line of cleavage between the social reformers in India, throughout the nineteenth century.

The approach of Rammohan Roy is best illustrated in the matter of abolition of the *Sati*, i. e. the burning of a widow with the dead body of her husband. The agitation against it had been going on for some time and Rammohan threw himself heart and soul into it. Among

other things he wrote pamphlets in order to prove that the inhuman rite was not sanctioned by the Hindu scriptures. But when the Governor-General, Lord William Cavendish-Bentinck, decided, against overwhelming opposition, to pass legislation abolishing the *Sati* rite, Rammohan did not support him nor did he approve of his action. He preferred steady pursuit of persuasive methods to any sudden change by legislation. He expressed the opinion that the practice might be suppressed quietly and unobservedly by increasing the difficulties and by the indirect agency of the Police.[12a] On the other hand, Keshab induced the Government to pass in 1872 the Native Marriage Act, popularly known as the Civil Marriage Act, for legalising marriages which were not valid according to the Hindu Law.

Under the inspiration and leadership of Keshab Chandra Sen the Brahma Samaj launched a comprehensive programme of social reform which formed a vital aspect of Indian renaissance. Some idea of these may be formed from the 'Indian Reform Association' which was founded by Keshab on his return from England in 1870. The programme of the association was carried through five sections, each with a secretary of its own. These sections were :

1. Female improvement. 2. Education of the Working Classes. 3. Cheap Literature. 4. Temperance. 5. Charity.

The item of cheap literature included the publication of the *Sulabh Samachar*, a weekly paper priced at one pice each issue. It was a new venture and soon became very popular. The education of women was put in the forefront of the programme of social reforms from beginning to end.

The 'Prarthana Samaj,' which was inaugurated in Bombay in 1867 as the counterpart of Brahma Samaj, followed a more moderate policy in sacial reforms under the leadership of Mahadev Govinda Ranade. He said : "We do not want to break

with the past and cease all connection with our society. We do not desire to give up our hold on the old established institutions." He was not, he said, "one of those who would abandon society because it tolerates what seems to them to be great evils."[13]

The result was that the members of the 'Prarthana Samaj' remained within the pale of Hinduism. But they rendered great service by the organization of social reform movement under the able guidance of M. G. Ranade who was the leading member of the Samaj.

But the ideas of social reform were not confined to the 'Brahma Samaj' and did not originate with it. Many English educated persons, who did not belong to it, were inspired by the rational and liberal spirit of the age and became ardent reformers of social abuses. They were inspired by, and rendered considerable help to, the small groups of Englishmen in India who, since the end of the eighteenth century, were eager to remove some of the most shocking and brutal social practices in India like the *Sati*, i.e. the burning of the widow along with her dead husband, which, as mentioned above, was abolished in 1829.

Another cruel practice which disgraced the name of the Hindus was that of killing a girl almost immediately after her birth. It was in vogue among some Rajput tribes in Varanasi, Cutch and Gujarat. Although the practice was declared illegal in 1795 and 1804, the difficulty of detecting a crime practised in utmost privacy baffled all efforts to check it. It was not till the middle of the 19th century that strenuous exertions of the British officials, backed by a general awakening of a rational spirit among the Indians through English education, bore fruit and the crime steadily declined in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The practice of throwing infants into the Ganges, many other less inhuman but cruel rites, and the sacrificial

slaughter of men by some aboriginal tribes, were also abolished, mainly by the exertions of the Government, backed by the support of the enlightened section of the people.

The abolition of *Sati* and other cruel practices gave a fillip to the movement for social reforms. The new spirit in Bengal was shown by the letters written in 1835 to local journals by women themselves, demanding spread of education among them and removal of certain grave evils from which they had been suffering, such as the prohibition of widow's remarriage and the polygamy practised by certain classes of Brahmans.

As early as 1837 agitation for the remarriage of widows was carried on in Calcutta and Bombay. Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, a learned Sanskrit scholar and Principal of the Sanskrit College, Calcutta, took the leading part in this agitation, and it was mainly due to his efforts that the Hindu Widows' Remarriage Act, legalising such marriage, was passed in 1856. Ishwar Chandra in Bengal and Vishnu Sastri in Western India put their heart and soul in the propagation of this reform. A widow marriage association was started in Bombay in 1866. But superstition dies hard, and the remarriage of Hindu widows did not make any substantial progress.

An earnest but unsuccessful effort was also made by the English educated Indians in Bengal to abolish, by legislation, the practice followed by a Kulin Brahman of marrying 50,60 or even more wives, most of whom he never met again after nuptial ceremonies were over.

The issue of legislation *vs* elevation of popular morals as the main instrument of social reforms, which, as mentioned above, divided Rammohan Roy and Keshab Chandra Sen, continued to agitate and divide the Hindu society for the next fifty years, and both sides could count on eminent men as their supporters. The question came to

a head again when Behram Malabari sought to secure legislation against child marriage and a Bill was introduced, raising the age of consent (on the part of the wife for consummation of marriage) from 10 years to 12. There was a strong protest by Tilak and many other eminent men, but the Act was passed in 1891.

It is unnecessary to refer to other social reforms in detail. But there arose a strong controversy, in connection with agitation over the Age of Consent Act, as to whether priority should be given to political independence or social reforms and educational progress. K.T. Telang took the lead in expressing the view that there can be no political progress while the social abuses were rampant. The other side insisted that political independence was *sine qua non* for real reforms in other directions. But Ranade very lucidly explained how the various reforms must be interlinked in order to achieve the real progress of the country. In his address to the first Provincial Social Conference at Satara he observed : "You cannot have a good social system when you find yourself low in the scale of political rights, nor can you be fit to exercise political rights and privileges unless your social system is based on reason and justice. You cannot have a good economic system when your social arrangements are imperfect. If your religious ideas are low and grovelling, you cannot succeed in social, economic or political spheres. This interdependence is not an accident, but is the law of our nature."[14]

IV. LITERATURE

There was no prose literature in Bengali language before the 19th century. Its beginnings may be traced to the foundation of Fort William College in Calcutta in A. D. 1800 for training the English officials in the diffierent languages of the country. It had a Bengali section with William Carey as its head. Under his inspiration several

Bengali books were written in prose between A. D. 1801 and 1805. Carey himself composed a grammar of the Bengali language in 1801, Bengali-English Dictionary in 1815, and other books besides the Bengali translation of the Bible. The Bengali prose got further impetus from Raja Rammohan Roy who propagated his heterodox views in a number of prose books and tracts. From this humble beginning a fine prose style was gradually evolved by the efforts of a large number of eminent writers. While the languages of Upper India came under the domination of Arabic and Persian, the Bengali language looked for sustenance and development to the rich resources of Sanskrit and the spoken language of the people. The writers in Bengali also drank deeply at the fountain of English literature. This changed the whole outlook of Bengali literature, both in prose and poetry. Hitherto the Bengali poetry, which had a long history extending over more than 500 years, concerned itself mainly with religious topics, but the influence of Romantic literature in Europe changed its whole character, and individual emotions as well as social and political topics formed its main theme. The prose literature was also similarly affected, and the new spirit manifested itself in the development of new types of literary products such as short story, novel, drama, biography, history, books of general knowledge, etc. In poetry heroics and lyrics of the Western type soon made their influence felt. The awakening of national consciousness and the application of a rational spirit in the discussion of religious, social, political and economic problems were much facilitated by the growth of the new type of literature. All these got the greatest stimulus by the growth of Bengali periodicals from A. D. 1818. The very first issue of the weekly *Samachar Darpan*, the most notable of the early periodicals, published on 23 May, 1818, gave a list of the topics which would form its chief features. It included such items as news

of India and Europe, new discoveries in Europe, and ancient history and culture of India. The periodicals soon became the chief forum for discussion of all topics—political, economical, social, educational, religious, etc.—which agitated or interested the public. The variety of topics dealt with in the large number of these periodicals increased the elasticity of the Bengali prose and made it a suitable vehicle of expression for all types of thoughts and ideas. It became gradually free from high-flown Sanskrit compounds, and three great masters, namely, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Bankim Chandra Chatterji and Rabindra Nath Tagore, ably helped by less renowned authors, transformed the Bengali language into one of the most beautiful and highly developed languages of modern world and at the same time a very powerful instrument for the awakening of the people from their age-long torpor.

The same kind of development took place in different regional languages of India, through the efforts of Christian missionaries and influence of English literature, either direct or through the medium of Bengali literature. This is true of Assamese, Oriya, Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Temil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Urdu, though in some cases the new development did not take place till the last quarter of the nineteenth contury.

V. THE PRESS.[15]

Great as was the value of newly developed Indian literature, its usefulness would have been considerably restricted but for the printing-press which was unknown in India before her contact with the West. It first came into general use in this country in the 19th century, though its beginnings may be traced somewhat earlier. The mechanical production of large number of copies in a short time, and the improvement of transport and communication by railways, steamers, and post offices, gave

a publicity to the various types of literature, described above, among the people living far away from important centres of learning. It was mainly due to the printing-press that the new spirit of the age was not confined to a select few, but made its influence felt over the people at large throughout the country.

This is best illustrated by the growth of the modern type of newspaper which has been justly described as the Fourth Estate. The journalism in India was started by European adventurers, and all the early periodicals in India were written in English and edited by Englishmen. The first paper, a weekly, called *Bengal Gazette*, was started by J. A. Hicky in 1780, who described it as "a weekly political and commercial paper open to all parties, but influenced by none". It is difficult to say how far Hicky acted up to this bold assertion, which can, with justice, be hardly claimed by a single newspaper of any importance in India even today, after the lapse of 180 years. It must, however, be said to the credit of Hicky that he enunciated the noble principle of the liberty of Press for which the Indians carried on a bitter fight up to the very end of the British rule. Hicky not only reiterated the view that the liberty of the press was essential to the very existence of an Englishman, but added that "the subject should have full liberty to declare his principles and opinions, and every action which tends to coerce that liberty is tyrannical and injurious to the community". But Hicky's comments on private persons, even the very highest, though often inspired by the laudable motive of exposing corruption, nepotism, and ineffiiciency, brought him into prison. Six other papers were started in Calcutta between 1780 and 1793, and the editor of one of these was deported.

In Madras, the earliest paper, the *Weekly Madras Courier*, was started in 1785, and was followed by two others

in 1795. In Bombay, the first paper, *Bombay Herald*, appeared in 1789, followed by two others. The editors of some of these incurred official wrath and a pre-censorship was imposed on some of them. It should be remembered, however, that all these papers were primarily intended for Englishmen and reflected their views and opinions. They occasionally criticised the Government, for it did not represent the British people but only a private trading company which was not liked by a large section even in England.

As mentioned above, Bengali periodicals did not appear before 1818, but a large number followed in quick succession. One of them was edited by Raja Rammohan Roy, and another was started by him along with Dwaraka Nath Tagore and some other distinguished, liberal-minded citizens of Calcutta. The *Gujarati Bombay Samachar* was started in A. D. 1822 and is still in existence. Several Urdu papers were published in Delhi in 1837, 1838 and the following years. The number of vernacular periodicals, as well as Engligh papers owned by both Europeans and Indians, grew slowly but steadily during the forties and the fifties. The leading newspaper edited by an Indian was the *Hindoo Patriot*, started in 1853, and edited by Haris Chandra Mukherji. Its object was described to be "a fair and manly advocacy of the interests of the country and an inpartial exposition of the social and political evils with which she is now afflicted". Seldom has a paper redeemed its pledge more nobly than did the *Hindoo Patriot*.

The Government, as stated above, never took kindly to the English papers that criticized their action. The growth of the vernacular press caused them alarm. Even liberal-minded officers like Munro and Elphinstone were opposed to the liberty of press in India. To the credit of Munro must it be said that he very frankly laid down the real ground of his un-English and illiberal view. In a minute dated 12 April, 1822, Munro candidly observed :

"A free press and the dominion of strangers are things which are imcompatible and which cannot long exist together, for what is the first duty of a free press? It is to deliver the country from a foreign yoke and to sacrifice to this one great object every measure and consideration".[16] Elphinstone held similar views,[17] but far-sighted Englishmen were not wanting who argued that a free press was "the best protection against sedition and revolution",[18] particularly in India whose people had no other way of bringing their grievances to the notice of the Government.

The policy of the British Government wavered between these two views for a long time. Reference has been made above to the punishment inflicted upon editors and the establishment of pre-censorship. The Marquess of Hastings abolished it and cancelled the order for the deportation of an editor, J. S. Buckingham, against the wishes of his Council. As soon as the Marquess left India, Mr. Adam, who officiated as Governor-General, deported Buckingham and suppressed his journal. But Adam did not stop here. On 14 March, 1823, a rigorous Press Ordinance was issued which prescribed that no one should publish a newspaper or other periodical without having previously obtained a license from the Governor-General in Council by submitting an affidavit.

This Press Ordinance will ever be memorable for the vigorous protest it drew forth from Raja Rammohan Roy and the constitutional agitation made against it by Indian leaders.

Under the laws, then in force, every new legislative measure had to be submitted to the Supreme Court for registration. The new Press Ordinance was submitted on 15th March, 1823, and two days later five distinguished citizens of Calcutta, led by Raja Rammohan Roy, submitted a memorial to the Supreme Court for hearing objections against it. It was a remarkable document discuss-

ing in a logical manner and well chosen diction, the general principles on which the claim for freedom of press was based in all modern countries. An English lady, Miss Collet, has referred to this memorial as the "Areopagitica of Indian History." Macnaghten, the sole acting Judge of the Supreme Court who heard the memorial, dismissed it, but had the candour to admit that "before the Ordinance was entered or its merits argued in Court he had pledged himself to Government to give it his sanction." Having failed to get any redress, Rammohan 'made an Appeal to the King in Council.' But this, too, shared the fate of the memorial. Miss Collet observed on this Appeal :

"In language and style for ever associated with the glorious vindication of liberty, it invokes against the arbitrary exercise of British power the principles and traditions which are distinctive of British History."

The activities of Rammohan and the five leading citizens of Calcutta in connection with the Press Ordinance of 1823 constitute a notable landmark in the history of India's struggle for freedom. An Englishman, once a high official in India, has observed on this episode :

"Ram Mohon himself, who, though not a lawyer, had brilliant powers of understanding and expounding legal matters, drafted the petition, which the other five also signed ; Chandra Kumar Tagore, Dwarkanath Tagore, Harchandra Ghose, Gauri Chandra Benerji, Prasanna Kumar Tagore, all men remembered by Indians as brave patriots who dared to stand up to Company, government, and court, not on behalf of any peculiarly Indian rights, but on behalf of what they and their admirers regarded as a natural right of all men, the free access to knowledge and opinion without the intervention of any authority to say what was good for them, what not. The whole memorial shows how they had become imbued

with English political principles and ways of thought. Declaring that they and their countrymen had been secured in the enjoyment of the same civil and religious privileges that every Briton was entitled to in England, they boldly asserted that the ordinance would be a sudden deprivation of one of the most precious of their rights, a right moreover, which they had not, and could not be charged with having, ever abused. It would preclude them from communicating to the Sovereign and his Council in England the real condition of his faithful subjects in India and the treatment they experienced from the local government. It would also endanger national education by putting a stop to the diffusion of knowledge either by translation from the learned languages of the East or by the circulation of literary intelligence drawn from foreign publications."

The same writer further remarks :

"Indian Calcutta, that had been little interested in the Press, and for many years afterwards found it no hardship to do without newspapers, was greatly excited by this act of daring, and thought of these men much as English people once thought of the Seven Bishops. Would the bold six be put in prison for their impudence in challenging the wisdom of authorities who had in their hands, in addition to the ordinary instruments of administration, Regulation III of 1818, under which executive decision alone without cause assigned or argument heard, could put a man in Jail ?[19]

As a matter of fact the daring act of Rammohan and his five associates marks the beginning of a new type of political activity which was destined to be the special characteristic of India for nearly a century. As Mr. R. C. Datta has justly observed :

"It was the start of that system of constitutional agitation for political rights which their countrymen have learnt to value so much in the present day."[20]

The far-reaching effects of this new type of political activity are justly estimated by the Englishman, mentioned above, who, writing shortly after the Round Table Conference held in London in 1930-31, remarked as follows :

> "A Round Table Conference in London to discuss India's future, with Indians taking a full share in the discussions, would have been a preposterous and incredible suggestion to Englishmen of the Company's days. It might never have come about had the great Ram Mohan Roy not taken the lead, and three Tagores, a Ghose, and a Banerji not joined with him in starting the process that led to it."[21]

Sir Charles Metcalfe, while officiating as Governor-General after the departure of William Bentinck in 1835, repealed the Ordinance of 1823 and removed all restrictions upon the press in India. This action was condemned by the Home authorities who penalised Metcalfe by passing over his claims to a vacant Governorship, and Metcalfe resigned in disgust. It may be noted that in spite of the apprehensions of the Government, the free press caused no difficulty and they felt no necessity for any restrictive legislation during the next 22 years, till the outbreak of 1857, when an Act was passed which required license for keeping a printing-press.

VI. THE POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

The most outstanding effect of the impact of Western culture upon India was the growth of modern political concepts such as nationalism, nationality, patriotism and political rights. As in many other fields, so in demand for political rights also, Raja Rammohan Roy took a leading part and set an example to others. Reference has been made above to his spirited protest against the Press Ordinance of 1823. He regarded this as a serious infringement of civil liberty which the Indians expected to enjoy under

British rule. He wrote against it, moved the Supreme Court, and also sent a petition to His Majesty for the repeal of the Ordinance. Rammohan carried on similar agitation against the Jury Act of 1827 by which the Christians, including native converts, could not be tried by a Hindu or Musalman juror, but any Hindu or Musalman could be tried by Europeans or native Christians. Rammohan also appealed to the Board of Control for the introduction of certain reforms. These included the fixation of maximum rents to be paid by the cultivator ; the substitution of English for Persian as the official language of the courts of law ; the appointment of native assessors in the civil courts ; trial by jury ; separation of the offices of judge and revenue commissioners ; separation of the offices of judge and magistrate ; codification oft he criminal law and also of the civil law of India ; consultation with the local magnates before enacting laws ; and last, but not the least, the appointment of Indians to higher posts, which were practically reserved for the British.

Some of these measures were advocated by others even before Raja Rammohan Roy. As early as June 27, 1818, the utility and importance of trial by jury was explained in the *Samachar Darpan*. The same paper, in its issue of 16th June, 1827, exhorted the people to try to secure greater share in the work of administration. To the argument that this would induce corruption, the paper replied : "This fact does not prove that the natives ought for ever to be excluded from responsible situations in the land of their birth."

Rammohan was the first Indian to voice the grievances of his country before the British authorities. He may justly be regarded as the pioneer of organized political movement in India, and the method followed by him marks the beginning of what came to be known in later days as constitutional. agitation. Rammohan's agitation was not perhaps altogether fruitless. It was generally

believed at the time that some of the beneficent provisions in the Charter Act of 1833 were mainly due to his influence.

It is very significant that public meetings for giving expression to public opinion on political matters also came into vogue about this time. At the request of the leading citizens of Calcutta the Sheriff called a public meeting at the Town Hall on 5 January, 1835, where a strong protest was made against some of the provisions of the Charter Act of 1833 and demand was made for the repeal of the Press Ordinance of 1823. Regular agitation in the press and on the platform for reforms in administration was carried on by the friends and associates of Rammohan after his death. The specific reforms demanded, in addition to those mentioned above, included 'the spread of education among the masses by free and compulsory education of children up to the age of fifteen, vocational training, through Government institutions, which would include, among others, agriculture, engineering, shipbuilding etc., representative Governmemt, powers for legislation, Indianisation of services, etc. On, April 18, 1843, the Hindu College students held a public meeting in the Town Hall to send a memorial to the Court of Proprietors praying for the bestowal of more offices on Indians. Tara Chand Chakravarty, who moved the resolution, vigorously attacked the maintenance of the Civil Service as a monopoly of Englishmen. He argued that 'it represses the expansion of talent and genius among the Indians and promotes a sort of clanship which usually blinds the use of justice to members of its own fraternity. So he pleaded for opening it to public competition. In another public meeting, held in 1853, Ramgopal Ghosh urged the Government to open the Civil Service, without any reservation, to the Indians. All these sufficienty indicate the advanced character of political ideas in Bengal in the second quarter

of the 19th century. As there was no English paper owned by an Indian, Prasanna Kumar Tagore started one, called the *Reformer*, in order to propagate these political views. Dwaraka Nath Tagore adopted the policy of purchasing large shares of influential Anglo-Indian papers for the same purpose.

Dwaraka Nath also realized the importance of establishing political associations. It was mainly by his efforts that the 'Landholders' Society' was established in July, 1838. Although it was primarily intended to look into the interests of the landholders, it deserves notice for three reasons.

In the first place, as Dr. Rajendra Lal Mitra very justly observed, it may be regarded as the pioneer of freedom in this country. It gave to the people the first lesson in the art of fighting constitutionally to assert their claims and give expression to their opinions. Ostensibly it advocated the rights of the Zamindars, but as their rights are intimately bound up with those of the ryots, the one cannot be separated from the other".[22]

Secondly, it was the avowed object of the organizers to establish "branch societies in every district of the British Indian empire with the view of establishing regular communications on all subjects connected with the object of the society." Thirdly, it enlisted the cooperation of Englishmen who sympathized with the political aspirations of the Indians. This, as well as the political character of the society, will be evident from Mr. Turton's speech in the meeting of the Society on November 3o, 1839, as reported in the *Bengal Harukaru* of December 14, and 16, 1839. "It was not as a conquered nation that he desired to retain the inhabitants of India as British subjects, but as brethren in every respect; as constituting a part of the Kingdom of Britain, as fellow-subjects—with the same feelings, the same interests and

objects, and the same rights as the British-born inhabitants of England. He admired the principle, adopted of old by the Romans, of incorporating their conquests with Rome, and granting to the conquered the privileges of Roman citizens."[23]

If we remember that this speech was delivered before the publication of Durham's Report containing the idea of the Dominion Status, it must be regarded as a remarkable example of political insight.

While the Indian associates of Raja Rammohan were carrying on his work in India, his friend Mr. William Adam was continuing the political agitation in England on behalf of India which the Raja had initiated. In order to rouse the interests of the English public in Indian affairs, Mr. Adam established the 'British India Society' in England, in July, 1839, and edited a journal called the *British Indian Advocate*, published by the Society early in 1841. The Landholders' Society of Calcutta decided to co-operate with the "British India Society" in London and appointed a Committee to supply regular information to the latter about Indian's grievances and demands.

The Landholders' Society was not content with this. Fully cognisant of the beneficent effects of political agitation in England, such as was carried on by Rammohan and after him by Adam, it decided, at the instance of Dwaraka Nath Tagore, to appoint paid agents in England for the same purpose. This novel procedure continued for some time, and had important consequences for the future.

In a meeting of the Landholders' Society held on July 17, 1843, Mr. Thompson was appointed such an agent. He was a well-known public man in England and had accompanied Dwaraka Nath Tagore to India when he returned from London in January, 1843. "He aroused unparalleled enthusiasm among the young Bengalis by a series of lectures and was mainly instrumental in founding the "Bengali

British India Society" on April 20, 1843. Five resolutions were passed in the inaugural meeting explaining the scope and nature of the Society. The third, moved by Tara Chand Chakravarty, defined the object of the Society to be "the collection and dissemination of information relating to actual condition of the people of British India.........and to employ such other means of a peaceable and lawful character, as may appear calculated to secure the welfare, extend the just rights, and advance the interests of all classes of our fellow-subjects".

There were thus, since 1843, two Political Associations in Bengal, *viz.* the Landholders' Society and the Bengal British India Society. As a contemporary remarked, the first represented the aristocracy of wealth, and the other, the aristocracy of intelligence. None of these can be said to have achieved great popularity, but there can be hardly any doubt that they served to rouse the political consciousness of the people. This became evident in 1849 when four bills were drafted by Mr. Bethune, the Law Member of the Government, with a view, among others, to extend the jurisdiction of the East India Company's Criminal Courts over the British-born subjects. Hitherto, these were subject only to the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court in Calcutta, with the result that the people in Moffussil had practically no judicial remedy against their oppression, as it was hardly possible for them to carry on litigation in the Supreme Court in Calcutta. But though the Bills were eminently just, the European community in Bengal characterised them as Black Acts and carried on such a violent agitation that the Government was forced to withdraw them in spite of strong protests of the Bengali leaders. The educated community of Bengal was profoundly shocked and felt the need of a strong Political Association, not only to safeguard Indian interests against the organized attacks of the European community, but also to represent Indian views to the

Parliament on the eve of the renewal of the Charter Act. The result was the amalgamation of the two existing political associations in Bengal into a new one named the British Indian Association.

The British Indian Association was founded on October 31 (according to some, October 29), 1851. From the very beginning it had an all-India outlook. We learn from its first Annual Report that the Committee of the Association carried on correspondence with leading political figures of other Provinces. A branch of the Association was founded in Madras, but it soon cut off its connection with the parent body. Independent political associations of the same nature were also established at Poona and Bombay.

The advance of political ideas in India is indicated by the fact that in 1852, when the new Charter Act was under consideration, several political organizations sent petitions to the British Parliament, complaining against grievances and praying for relief. A scrutiny of the demands made by the British Indian Association of Calcutta, taken along with those proposed since the days of Rammohan and mentioned above, seems to indicate that most of the political demands of the Indian National Congress during the first ten years were largely anticipated by the political leaders of Bengal more than thirty years before. In some respects the Bengali leaders went even farther. The petition sent by the British Indian Association to the British Parliament in 1852 dwelt at great length upon the *evils of the union of political or executive power with the legislative,* and prayed for the establishment of a Legislature, which should "be a body not only distinct from the persons in whom the political and executive powers are vested, but also *possessing a popular character* so as in some respects to represent the sentiments of the people and to be so looked upon by them." Hence the petitioners desired that "the *legislature of British India be placed on the footing of those*

enjoyed by most of the colonies of Her Majesty." They accordingly proposed the constitution of a Legislative Council, composed of 17 members, including three representatives of the people and one nominated official from each of the Presidencies."[24]

The British Indian Association was not satisfied with the concessions made to their demands in the Charter Act of 1853. So they continued the agitation for the inclusion of Indians in the Legislative Council, and demanded the recognition of the principle of equality of all classes of citizens in the eye of the law. It also prayed for the holding of the Civil Service Examination in India.

The Association brought to the notice of the Local Government the manifold grievances of the people, and suggested various measures of reform. It established local branches and tried to rouse the interest of the masses in political questions. For this purpose, it translated various Bills into Bengali and circulated them extensively all over the Province for eliciting public opinion. It also framed questionnaire on important current topics like indigo-planting and similarly circulated them.

The ideas of the British Indian Association were preached by distinguished Bengalis. Peary Chand Mitra and Ramgopal Ghosh urged upon the necessity of throwing open all offices, including Civil Service, without any reservation, to Indians, on the ground of equity, economy and the good of India. Dwaraka Nath Tagore advocated the introduction of trial by jury both in the Supreme Court and Moffussil Courts. Prasanna Kumar Tagore showed from the *Mitakshara* that the jury system was not unknown in India, and regarded it as the best guarantee for fair and impartial justice. Kishori Chand Mitra strongly condemned the exemption of British-born subjects from the jurisdiction of the ordinary Courts in the Moffussil, and regarded it as unconstitutional and unjust in principle, and often

oppressive in practice. Gobinda Chandra Datta, who was the first to raise his voice against such inequality in the eye of the law as early as 1846, also strongly advocated the separation of executive and judicial powers, and condemned the system of imprisonment, even of bad characters, on mere suspicion without adequate proof. In this connection, he referred to the laws and practices prevailing in France and England.

Dakshina Ranjan Mukhopadhyaya proposed that each Province should have a Council consisting of Government nominees and representatives of the people in equal numbers, the latter being elected by the people of each district possessing a minimum property qualification. There should also be a Supreme Council, half of whose members would be nominated by the Government and the other half by the Provincial Councils.

The growth of political ideas and political associations in Bengal during the first half of the nineteenth century have been reviewed at some length, because it may justly be regarded as the greatest contribution towards the Freedom Movement in India in the first half of the nineteenth century. We do not know of any parallel development of such political organizations in any other part of India during the same period. They were gradually spread in Bombay, Madras and the rest of India, proving the truth of Gokhale's dictum that "what Bengal thinks to-day, the rest of India thinks to-morrow."

CHAPTER II.

BIRTH OF INDIAN NATIONALISM

I. IMPACT OF WESTERN IDEAS

Nationalism is one of those concepts which are easy to understand but difficult to define in precise terms. There is, however, a general consensus of opinion that the minimum essential elements of nationalism are contained in the following dictum of Mill :

"A portion of mankind may be said to constitute a nationality if they are united among themselves by common sympathies which do not exist between them and any others, which make them co-operate with each other more willingly than with the other people, desire to be under the same government, and desire that it should be governed by themselves or a portion of them exclusively."[1]

Such a feeling may exist as a result of, or may be created by, a variety of circumstances, such as the community of race, language, religion, or culture ; residence within a geographical area fixed by nature or long tradition or both ; identity of present political interests ; common historical traditions of the past ; common subjection to the same ruling authority, etc. These may be called the basic factors of nationalism, but none of them forms an essential element of it. The presence of one or more of them does not make a people a nation if a considerable body of them are not inspired by the requisite feelings described above ; while a people possessed of the requisite feelings may constitute a nation even in the absence of one or more of the basic factors.

Judged by this standard there was no conception of

Indian nationalism at the commencement of British rule. As will be seen later, nationalism grew in Bengal earlier than in other parts of India. But even at the beginning of the nineteenth century the horizon of the Bengàlis, like the peoples of other Provinces of India, was limited by the frontier of their own country, and they felt no concern for the rest of India. An armed robbery in the Dhurrumtollah street excited greater interest in Calcutta in 1803 than the battles of Assye and Argaon. As noted above,[2] every successive British victory over an Indian State served as an occasion for thanksgiving to the Divine Providence for the success of the British arms, in which the Bengalis felt a sort of vicarious glory. But the Bengalis were by no means more culpable in this respect than others. Writing in 1824, Heber says that the Bengalis were regarded by the Hindustanis as no less foreigners than the English.[3] This parochial spirit was due mainly to historical traditions and the difficulties of communication between different parts of India. The devastations caused by the Marathas all over Hindustan, particularly in Bengal and Rajputana, within living memory, made them odious to the inhabitants of these regions, and the dread of the Bargis supplied theme to lullaby songs in Bengal.

The problem of communication was also no less important. To an Indian of the twentieth century it would require an effort to visualize the mode of journey from Bengal to Delhi, Madras or Bombay before 1850. Men had to negotiate these long distances through a difficult terrain, full of dangers from wild animals and still more ferocious Pindaris, Thugs or other classes of robbers. Except where boats could ply, one had to walk or use a cart, as horses and other carriages were too costly for an ordinary man. Save for pilgrimage or urgent business, journeys to distant lands were very uncommon. Then there was the difficulty of languages. Neither Hindi nor Urdu

could serve as a *lingua franca* for a considerable part of India, and even Persian was not as popular in the nineteenth as it was in the eighteenth century. The whole country was divided into a large number of self-contained units, almost mutually exclusive in character, and the conception of India as a common motherland was still in the realm of fancy. There was no India as it is understood today. There were Bengalis, Hindustanis, Marathas, Sikhs, etc. but no Indian, at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

True nationalism is based on partriotism and love of liberty in general. These ideas were developed in India by the impact of Western culture. The first manifestation of it is seen in Raja Rammohan Roy's passionate love of liberty which "made him take interest in, and deeply sympathise with, all political movements all over the world that had for their object the advancement of popular freedom".[4] His cosmopolitan sympathy in the domain of politics is well illustrated by several incidents. When the political aspirations of the people of Naples were crushed by the Holy Alliance in 1821, the Raja was so depressed by the news that he cancelled an engagement for the evening with Mr. Buckingham and wrote to him: "From the late unhappy news I am obliged to conclude that I shall not live to see liberty universally restored to the nations of Europe, and Asiatic nations, espcially those that are European colonies, possessed of a greater degree of the same blessing than what they now enjoy." The letter concludes with the remarkable sentence: "Enemies to liberty and friends of despotism have never been and never will be ultimately successful".[5] The Raja also gave a public dinner at the Town Hall in Calcutta on the establishment of constitutional Government in Spain. During his voyage to England, though suffering from some injuries in his leg, he insisted on visiting two French frigates who were flying the tricolour flag.[6]

But far more important in its ultimate effect was the development of a passionate yearning for liberty and ardent patriotic feeling among the English-educated young men in Bengal. These were instilled into the minds of the students of the Hindu College, Calcutta, by its young and gifted teacher, Henry Louis Vivian Derozio, a half-caste Portuguese, during his brief tenure of office as a teacher in that institution between 1828 and 1831. He had unflinching faith in the French Revolution and English Radicalism and drew the senior boys to him like a magnet. No teacher in India probably exercised greater influence over his pupils.[7]

He urged his students to think freely for themselves and to live and die for truth. Through the mediums of Academic Associations and College Magazines, Derozio and his pupils discussed such topics as free will and fate, virtue and vice, patriotism, idolatry, priestcraft, and even the existence of God, not to speak of subjects of lesser importance like female education and cheap justice. The practical effect of the political teachings of Derozio may be illustrated by two incidents. On 10 December, 1830, 200 persons attended the July Revolution celebration in the Town Hall. On Christmas day of the same year the tricolour flag of the French Revolution was hoisted on the Ochterlony Monument, and it is not difficult to guess, by whom.

Derozio regarded himself as an Indian and wrote patriotic verses, a specimen of which is given below :

My country ! in the days of glory past
A beauteous halo circled round thy brow,
And worshipped as a deity thou wast,
Where is that glory, where that reverence now ?
Thy eagle pinion is chained down at last,
And grovelling in the lowly dust art thou,
Thy minstrel hath no wreath to weave for thee
Save the sad story of thy misery !

Well—let me dive into the depths of time,
And bring from out the ages that have rolled
A few small fragments of those wrecks sublime,
Which human eye may never more behold ;
And let the guerdon of my labour be,
My fallen country ! one kind wish for thee.

This poem of Derozio, published in 1827, may be regarded as the first patriotic poem written in India. Through his teachings the Hindu College students became familiar with the most radical views then prevalent in Europe. They carefully studied the history and revolutionary philosophy of France and were deeply stirred by the wave of revolutions in Europe in 1830. That some of them even looked forward to the outbreak of a similar revolution in India may be gathered from a series of essays on the grievances of India published in the *Bengal Harukaru* of 1843. A deep patriotic feeling inspired a number of poems written about 1830 by Kashi Prasad Ghosh, a student of the Hindu College. In one of these he sang the glory of the motherland as follows :

"Land of the Gods and lofty name ;
Land of the fair and beauty's spell ;
Land of the bards of mighty fame,
My native land ! for e'er farewell !"

In has been justly remarked that "this song might be taken as the first cry of patriotic fervour, which was roused in Bengal by the introduction of Western culture,."

But while the students of the Hindu College dreamt of independence, they were the first to recognize that it would take long in coming. This sentiment is beautifully expressed in the following verse by Kashi Prasad.

"But woe me ! I never shall live to behold,
That day of thy triumph, when firmly and bold,
Thou shalt mount on the wings of an eagle on high,
To the region of knowledge and blest liberty."[8]

Although the grounds were thus being prepared for the

growth of nationalism, the early effects of Western influence pointed to the opposite direction. At the beginning a section of English-educated Bengali youths were carried away by a strong current of Western culture. They became very much anglicised and had inordinate fondness for everything Eaglish. They adopted Western ideas and habits, dresses and mannerisms, customs and usages, and openly indicated their repugnance to everything Indian. They spoke in English, thought in English, and as humorously remarked by Bhudeb Mukherji, probably even dreamed in English. They had a sneering contempt for almost everything Indian. The evils grew with the spread of English education, and in course of time a small group of Westernised people formed a distinct section within the Indian community.

But fortunately a reaction against the sweeping current of Western influence was not long in coming. It manifested itself in the growth of an intense nationalism during the third quarter of the nineteenth century. It may be truly said that if rationalism was the watchword of the first generation of English-educated Bengalis, that of the second generation was nationalism.

Among the factors contributing to it an important place must be given to the growing knowledge of the glory and greatness of the ancient Hindus. When ths Indians first began to learn English, little was known of their ancient history, and even the comprehensive and standard history of India like that written by James Mill about that time unhesitatingly expressed the view that the Hindus had ever been in the same abject condition in which the Englishmen found them in the eighteenth century.[9] The very poor knowledge that the Indians themselves possessed about their own past history is shown by the history of the Hindu kings written by Mrityunjay Bhattacharya, a Pandit of the Fort William College in Calcutta, in the year A.D. 1808.[10]

The works of early oriental scholars like Sir William Jones, Prinsep, Bothlingk and other Europeans had not yet reached or impressed the general public. But the regular archaeological explorations and excavations, commencing in A.D. 1861 under the personal supervision of Alexander Cunningham, and the writings of Max Muller, Wilson, Fergusson, Rajendra Lal Mitra and others in a more popular form, brought home to the educated Indians a very vivid picture of the past glory and greatness of ancient India which placed her on the same pedestal as Greece or Rome. This inspired the Hindus with a sense of their rich heritage from the past and the leading part they once played as a great nation in the history of the world. It necessarily generated in their minds a spirit of self-confidence and held out before them a bright vision of their future destiny. The views promulgated by European scholars that the forefathers of the Hindus belonged to the same group of mankind from which were derived all the nations of Europe famous in ancient and modern times ; that the Vedas, the sacred literature of the Hindus, were the oldest literary works in the world, that the Upanishads contained the most profound philosophical speculations that human mind has ever conceived ; that Emperor Asoka united the whole of India and Afghanistan under one rule, as testified to by his own records engraved on stone more than two thousand years ago ; and that, thanks mainly to his efforts, Buddhism, originating in India, played a great role in civilizing a large portion of the population of the world, so much so, that even today one-fifth of the human race still professed that faith;—all these could not fail to stir deeply the hearts of the Hindus, with the result that they were imbued with a spirit of nationalism and ardent patriotism. The revelation of India's past was one of the strongest foundations on which Indian nationalism was built, and gave it that stamp of Hindu character which made its influence felt in many

ways at different stages of political evolution in India.

Another factor that must have stimulated the growth of nationalism in India was the strong current of nationalist ideas which passed over the whole of Europe during the first half of the nineteenth century. The ideas and events culminating in the American independence and the French Revolution in the latter part of the 18th century, the glorious struggles for freedom in different regions of Europe in 1830 and 1848, and the stories of heroic resistance and untold sufferings associated with them, made a profound impression upon the English-educated Indians. In particular, the liberation from foreign yoke of Greece and Italy, two ancient centres of culture like India, and the fight for freedom by the Irish, subject to servitude under a common master, deeply stirred the emotion of the Indians, and evoked feelings of nationalism of the same type. The visit of Indians to Europe in increasing numbers contributed to the same end by making them familiar with the working of the free political institutions of Europe.

One of the important factors in the development of nationalism in Bengal was the new movement in Brahma Samaj, initiated by Keshab Chandra Sen, which carried one step further the ideal of freedom not only in respect of religious ideas—which was already developed by the older section—but also in social ideas and personal conduct. Shri B. C. Pal, who was intimately connected with this movement, thus refers to it:

"The Brahmo Samaj, under Keshub Chandra Sen, had proclaimed a new gospel of personal freedom and social equality, which reacted very powerfully upon this infant national consciousness and the new political life and aspirations of young Bengal. Keshub's controversies with the Christian missionaries were widely read and greatly enjoyed not only by his own followers and coreligionists but by the entire body of our English-educated country-

men. In his victories over the Christian missionaries in these controversies, Keshub's countrymen, even outside his church and community, felt a genuine pride, which powerfully fed their national conceit. Keshub's English visit and the way he was lionised by the British public and the British Press also reacted very powerfully upon the mind of his people in India. The old paralyzing sense of superiority of their new pnlitical masters over them was visibly replaced by a new self-confidence in our educated countrymen in consequence of Keshub's successful missionary propaganda in England."[11]

The all-India tour of Keshab[12] also fostered the ideas of national unity by bringing together on a common platform diverse peoples of India in different regions. He was the first great all-India figure symbolizing the unity of Indian culture. This was proved beyond doubt by the high regard in which he was held all over Ihdia—a fact strikingly demonstrated after his death. Sir Henry Cotton remarks : "The death of Keshav Sen in January, 1884, was one of the earliest occasions for the manifestation of a truly national sentiment in the country. The residents of all parts of India, irrespective of caste and creed, united with one voice in the expression of sorrow at his loss and pride in him as member of one common nation."[13]

II. HINDU NATIONALISM

But the value of Kashab's contribution to the growth of nationalism was considerably reduced by two factors. In the first place, he eschewed politics and "accepted the British subjection of India as due to the intervention of God's special Providence for the salvation of India."[14] Secondly, his inspiration came solely from the West and he had very strong leanings towards Christianity.[15] At this cultural crisis, when Keshab and his followers, the

progressive Brahmas, might prove to be a highly denationalizing element in the body-politic owing to their tendencies towards European ethics and theology, the tide was turned by Rajnarain Bose, himself a product of the Western education. He held out before his countrymen a complete and comprehensive picture of nationalism, touching almost every aspect of life, in a prospectus which he issued in 1866 with a view to the establishment of a "Society for the promotion of National Feeling among the educated Natives of Bengal".[16] The object of this Society was to resist the powerful tendency of imitating the West by reviving the old ideas, traditions and customs in every walk of life. Indigenous gymnastic exercises, Indian music, Hindu medicine, Bengali food, dress and etiquette etc. were to replace the foreign forms thereof, recently introduced ; boys were to learn their mother-tongue before English, cultivation of Sanskrit was to be encouraged, results of researches in Indian antiquities were to be published in Bengali, English words were not to be mixed with Bengali in ordinary conversations between Bengalis, and proceedings of meetings were to be conducted in Bengali. Rabindra Nath Tagore says in his autobiography that he and his elder brother joined a secret society founded by Rajnarain Bose and got from him their first inspiration to free India.[17]

The ideas preached by Rajnarain Bose were enthusiastically taken up by Nabagopal Mitra. He started an annual gathering known as the Hindu Mela in order "to promote the national feeling, sense of patriotism and a spirit of self-help among the Hindus". The special features of the gathering were patriotic songs, poems and lectures, a detailed review of the political, social, economic, and religious conditions of India, an exhibition of indigenous arts and crafts, and performances of indigenous forms of physical exercises and feats of physical strength. It

had an all-India outlook, and specimens of arts and crafts were collected from Banaras, Jaipur, Lakhnau, Patna and Kashmir.

The Hindu Mela met altogether fourteen times from 1867 to 1880. Its importance gradually declined owing to the establishment of other associations more directly connected with the political and national movement in Bengal. But it is impossible to overestimate the importance of its contribution to the growth of national feeling in Bengal. The patriotic songs and peoms sung and recited in this Mela, including two by Rabindra Nath, then a boy of 18, are still regarded as treasures of Bengali literature.

An association, called the 'National Society', was founded after the fourth session of the Mela. Its avowed object was the promotion of unity and national feeling among the Hindus. As the Mela was confined to the Hindus, objection was taken to the use of the word 'National'. Against this, the *National Paper*, the organ of the Mela, observed as follows :

"We do not understand why our correspondent takes exception to the Hindus who certainly form a nation by themselves, and as such a society established by them can very well be called 'National Society' ".

This was not an isolated expression of views, casually formed, but rested on a deep-rooted conviction which, at first confined to a small section, was gradually imbibed, consciously or unconsciously, by a large majority of educated people.

Nabagopal elaborated his view of Hindu nationalism through his writings. 'He held that the chief criterion of nationalism is unity. This unity, according to him, is brought about, sustained and promoted in different peoples by different means and on different principles. The principle which promoted nationalism amongst the Greeks was love of country, amongst the Jew the Mosaic Law, amongst

the Romans the love of liberty and renown, and amongst the English the love of liberty. He maintained that the basis of national unity in India has been the Hindu religion'. "Hindu nationality," he said, "is not confined to Bengal. It embraces all of Hindu name and Hindu faith throughout the length and breadth of Hindustan; neither geographical position, nor the language is counted a disability. The Hindus are destined to be a religious nation".[18]

A few years latter later Rajnarain himself proceeded to base his nationalism on the Hindu religion. He had deliberately eschewed politics and religion from the purview of the Society which he founded in 1866 for the promotion of national feeling among the Bengalis. But it 1872 he delivered a lecture boldly proclaiming "the superiority of Hindu religion and culture over European and Christian theology and civilization".[19] The Hindus, said he, had forgotten their past to such an extent that they had no recollectjon of the fact that rational thinking and ideas of social and personal freedom were not wanting in the history of their own culture. Rajnarain Bose boldly asserted that "not only have we the most perfect system of theism or monotheism in our ancient theology and religion, but Hinduism presented also a much higher social idealism, all its outer distinctions of caste notwithstanding, than has as yet been reached by Christendom.[20] How far his views were historically correct, we need not discuss in the present context. But there is no doubt that he deliberately proceeded to found nationalism on the basis of Hindu religion as he conceived it. At the conclusion of his lecture he quoted the following lines of Milton: "Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep and shaking her invincible locks; methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full mid-day heaven." He then observed: "Similarly I may say that I see in my

mind the noble and puissant Hindu nation rousing herself after sleep, and rushing headlong towards progress with divine prowess. I see this rejuvenated nation again illumining the world by her knowledge, spirituality and culture, and the glory of Hindu nation again spreading over the whole world. In this hope I bring this discourse to a close after reciting panegyric of India's triumph".[20a] He then recited a national song composed by Satyendra Nath Tagore, the elder brother of Rabindra Nath and the first Indian member of the Indian Civil Service. This famous song was a stirring call to the sons of India to unite and sing the glory of India, unequalled in the whole world for her natural beauty, material resources, and the galaxy of her ideal women, sages and poets.

The effect produced by this lecture of Rajnarain Bose may be judged from the following concluding lines of its review (when published in the form of a book) by Bankim Chandra Chatterji :[20b]

"Let there be a shower of flowers and sandal on the pen of Rajnarain Babu. Let this epic song be sung everywhere in India. Let it find an echo in every murmurring tree on the banks of the Ganga, Yamuna, Sindhu Narmada, and Godavari. Let it be sounded by the roaring waves of the Eastern and Western Oceans. Let it touch the right chord in the hearts of two hundred millions of Indians." It is hardly necessary to state that the ideas of Rajnarain were catching and his clarion call rallied round his banner a large number of Hindus who accepted his views with enthusiasm, and probably without argument or discussion.

Bankim Chandra himself fostered the ideas of Hindu nationalism by his writings. In a Bengali article (Disgrace of Bharat—why she lost her freedom), published in 1872, Bankim briefly described what he understood by nationalism. The following is a free rendering of the relevant passage ;

"I am a Hindu, you are a Hindu, Ram is a Hindu, Jadu is a Hindu, and there are many lakhs of such Hindus. Whatever is good for them is good for me. Whatever is bad for them is also bad for me. So I must do what s good for all the Hindus and abstain from doing what is bad for any Hindu. Ram, Jadu, indeed every Hindu must act likewise. If it be so, it is the duty of the Hindus to take counsel together, and agree upon a definite policy and chalk out a common line of action. This conception is the first half of nationalism.

"There are many nations in the world besides the Hindu. Whatever is good to them is not necessarily good to us. In many cases what is good to them is bad to us. In such cases we must so act as to deprive them of the good. If this involves oppression of other nations, we shall not shrink from it. Similarly, something that is good to us might bring evil to them. Even so, we must not cease to work for the good of our nation ; if that means causing evil to another nation, we shall do so. This is the second half of nationalism."

Bankim forestalled modern criticism by admitting that nationalism, as conceived by him, is not a holy or ethical sentiment and has produced great evils in Europe. But he defended it as follows ;

"Whether nationalism is good or bad, whichever nation possesses it in a greater degree becomes more powerful than others. National consciousness is very strong in Europe today and has caused many a political revolution. It has unified Italy. It is at the root of the most powerful German Empire. What more will happen, none can tell."

It does not fall within the scope of the present work to discuss the merits or demerits of Bankim's views. It is only necessary to emphasize the fact that his utterances give a clear indication of the trend of political thought

in Bengal in the third quarter of the nineteenth century.

Hindu nationalism also got great impetus from the Arya Samaj, of which a brief history has been given above. B. C. Pal, who witnessed the early stages of its development, has described it as follows.

"The fact of the matter is that the new generation of Hindus in the Punjab felt a keen humiliation in their inability to meet the attacks of Moslem and Christian propagandists, who condemned their religion as idolatry and polytheism. In the message of Pandit Dayananda they discovered first, a powerful defensive weapon by which they could repudiate the claims to superiority of Christianity and Islam over their national religion. Dayananda, in the second place, did not only find a weapon of defence to the Punjab Hindu in his *Satyartha-Prakash*, he made a violent attack on Christian and Moslem propaganda showing up the unreason of both these alien systems and exposing what he believed to be their moral lapses also. All this helped to feed the pride of race of the Punjabee Hindu, who had previously found himself in a completely helpless position under the attacks of Christian and Muslim propaganda."[21]

As noted above, the Arya Samaj was a militant sect from the very beginning. Its "chief inspiration came from its intense patriotism. This patriotism has always carried with it a spirit of intolerance of, if not virulent antagonism to, other religious systems, particularly the Moslem. Its attitude towards Christianity is not less hostile, though certainly not so open as it is towards Islam."[22] Ere long it developed an anti-foreign sentiment which was particularly strong among the younger section. "The young Arya Samajists openly declared that they were waiting for the day when they would settle their account both with Moslems and the Britishers".[23]

But the Arya Samaj had also a positive aproach to

nationalism. "Political independence was one of the first objectives of Dayananda. Indeed he was the first man to use the term *Swaraj*, he was the first to insist on people using only *Swadeshi* things manufactured in India and to discard foreign things. He was the first to recognize Hindi as the national language of India".[24] Whatever one might think of these claims[25] put forward by the biographer of Dayananda, there is no doubt that the Arya Samaj aimed at the creation of an Indian nation by establishing a common religion and culture all over India. For this it adopted *Suddhi* or reconversion into Hinduism of all those who had once renounced it, either willingly or under duress.

Similarly a great impetus was given to Hindu nationalism by the Theosophical Society. Its effect on Indian mind is thus described by B. C. Pal :

"This Society told our people that instead of having any reason to be ashamed of their past or of the legacies left to them by it, they have every reason to feel justly proud of it all, because their ancient seers and saints had been the spokesmen of the highest truths and their old books, so woefully misunderstood today, had been the repositories of the highest human illumination and wisdom. Our people had hitherto felt perpetually humiliated at the sense of their degradation. This new message, coming from the representatives of the most advanced peoples of the modern world, the inheritors of the most advanced culture and civilisation the world has as yet known, at once raised us in our own estimation and created a self-confidence in us that commenced to find easy expression in a new propaganda which, instead of apologising for our current and mediaeval ideas and institutions and seeking to reform and reconstruct these after modern European ideals, boldly stood up in defence of them".[26] Elsewhere Pal says : "But the greatest contribution of Theosophy to the development of

our national consciousness was in its new and strange gospel of Ancient Indian Wisdom and in its announcement of a great world purpose and world mission which India yet had for the races of the modern world."[27]

The Hindu nationalism should not, however, be regarded as a counterpart or rival of Muslim nationalism as represented by the Wahabis. For, though based on the old glory of the Hindus it embraced within its purview all the races and creeds of India. Unlike Wahabism it was not inspired by the ideal of establishing Hindu rule in India. This contrast will be explained later. Apart from this, the idea of Indian nationalism, pure and simple, also loomed large in Bengal.

III. NATIONALISM IN BOMBAY.

Though the spirit of nationalism was first evolved in Bengal it soon spread to other parts of India, but the positive evidence afforded by contemporary records is not as adequate or as easily available as in Bengal. In Bombay the writings and activities of Vishnu Krishna Chiplunkar, who died in 1882, Mahadev Govinda Ranade, Gopal Ganesh Agarkar and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, as well as the ideas preached by Gopalrao Hari Deshmukh, Vishnubuwa Brahmachari and Jyotirao Phule definitely indicate the growth of a strong national feeling. This is only what could be normally expected. For the people of Maharashtra occupied a high and honourable position in Indian politics even within living memory. Less than a century ago they had made a bold bid for political supremacy such as the British now enjoyed in India, and the last descendant of the Peshwas, though in exile, continued as a living symbol of their political glory and greatness till A.D. 1853.

For similar reasons the Muslims, as mentioned above, were also inspired by a national feeling from the very beginning of the British rule. But it was dominated by

class consciousness from the very start as it was based solely on the memory of their political greatness and historical traditions and not broadbased on those ideas of patriotism and nationalist feeling which the Hindus of Bengal imbibed through western education. The nationalism of Maharashtra was saved from this narrowness by the influence of western ideas, and was gradually merged into the widely developing Indian nationalism, which was a characteristic feature of the political growth in India during the latter half of the nineteenth century. As this nationalism was a product of English education, and the Muslims as a class lagged far behind the Hindus in taking advantage of it, there was a marked divergence in the growth of nationalism among the Hindus and Muslims. The Wahabi movement in the first half of the nineteenth century was a genuine national movement, but it was exclusively Muslim in character.[28] On account of this Muslim exclusiveness the western type of nationalism gradually partook of a Hindu character. This process was hastened by the fact, mentioned above, that the past glory and greatness of the Hindus came to form the solid basis of this nationalism. This was quite natural, for in every country the memory of past greatness binds the people together into a national unity. But in India this historic consciousness operated upon the two major elements of the population, the Hindus and the Muslims, in diametrically opposite ways. Every historical incident in the past which reflected glory upon the one was a humiliating memory to the other. The triumphs of Muhammad ibn Qasim, Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni, and Muhammad Ghuri which swelled the pride of the Muslims as a great conquering nation of the world, only evoked painful memories of national degradation and humiliation in the minds of the Hindus.

A very striking illustration of what has been stated above is afforded by the development of nationalism in

Bombay. Here, too, as in Bengal, it was the English education that fostered the spirit of nationality as the people imbibed, along with western culture, the love of freedom, the spirit of patriotism, the blessings of self-government, the higher duty of self-sacrifice for the preservation of national honour and national liberty, and similar ideas which permeate western literature but are comparatively strangers to our own. Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the great nationalist leader of Bombay, gave expression to these ideas through his paper the *Kesari*. As far back as 1885 he wrote :

"We are, at present, gradually being inspired by the spirit of patriotism. The birth of patriotism among us is due to English rule and English education. English education has imparted to us knowledge of ancient and modern history ; it has enabled us to know what were the fruits of patriotism among the ancient Greeks and Romans. We have also learned from their histories how, when they lost their patriotism, they were subjected to foreign domination and became ignorant and superstitious. English rule has made us realise the necessity of cultivating patriotism in our national concerns.........The spirit of patriotism has not as yet permeated all classes. It is only those who have come under the influence of English education and began to realise the defects of British administration that have been inspired by that spirit. Patriotism is not our national quality, it is the product of the influences to which we have been subjected after the introduction of British rule".

Tilak made it the great object of his life to diffuse the spirit of patriotism and nationalism among the masses. Among the expedients adopted by him were the inauguration of Shivaji festival and the transformation of the traditional worship of Ganapati into an altogether new form. Thus he requisitioned into the national service two of the great forces which are calculated to deeply stir the national

mind, namely religion and history. But both the institutions produced diametrically opposite effects upon the Hindus and Muslims. The images of Hindu gods have always inspired the Muslims with iconoclastic fury, and their traditional role in Indian history has been to break them to pieces rather than make them serve any national purpose. Even though bereft of any power to do any mischief, their religion forbade them to derive any good out of it. As Shivaji had founded the Maharashtra kingdom in the teeth of opposition from the most powerful Muslim Emperor in India, a festival in his honour was well calculated to inspire the masses in Maharashtra. But as Shivaji and the Maratha power founded by him were rightly associated in the minds of the Muslims with the decline and fall of the greatest Muslim Empire in India, their national vanity was sure to be wounded by doing any honour to the great Maratha leader.

IV. FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE GROWTH OF NATIONALISM

In Bengal the growth of literature made the greatest contribution to the development of national and patriotic feeling during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The name of Bankim Chandra Chatterji stands foremost in this connection. His famous novel *Anandamāth* contains the hymn *Bande Mataram* which had been the national anthem of India up to 1947. During the long and arduous struggle for freedom from 1905 to 1947 *Bande Mataram* was the rallying cry of the patriotic sons of India, and thousands of them succumbed to the *lathi* blow of the British police or mounted the scaffold with *Bande Mataram* on their lips. The main theme of the novel inspired the Bengali youths to supreme self-sacrifice during the hectic days of the Swadeshi movement. The central plot moves round a band of *sanyasins,* called *santanas* or children,

who left their hearth and home and dedicated their lives to the cause of their motherland. They worshipped their motherland as the Goddess Kali—they knew no other deity save the land of their birth, and no other religion except the service of their motherland. That is why they called themselves *santanas* or children of the mother. In their temple they placed three images of the Goddess Kali representing the motherland,—Mother that was, great and glorious in her majestic grandeur ; Mother that is, wretched and grovelling in the dust ; and the Mother that will be, in her pristine glory. No other Bengali book—or for the matter of that book written in any language—so profoundly moved the Bengali youths save perhaps Sarat Chandra's *Pather Dabi* written half a century later. The later novel was an emotional protest against the British rule, as the earlier one was nominally against the Muslim rule. This aspect of *Anandamath* and the imagery of Goddess Kali leave no doubt that Bankim Chandra's nationalism was Hindu rather than Indian. This is made crystal clear from his other writings which contain a passionate outburst against the subjugation of India by the Muslims. 'From that day set the sun of our glory'—that is the repeated refrain of his essays and novels which not unoften contain adverse and sometimes even irreverent remarks against the Muslims. The plots of some of his novels are based on historical fights between Hindus and Muslims, such as Bakhtyar Khalji's invasion of Bengal, Aurangzeb's fight with the Rajputs, etc. and the reader is never in doubt as to where his sympathies lay. The following confession of the great Bengali leader B. C. Pal echoes the sentiment of every young Hindu reader of Bankim's novels :

"*Durgesh-nandini* quickened my earliest patriotic sentiments. Our sympathies were all entirely with Birendra Singha, and the court-scene where the Moslem invader was stabbed through his heart by Vimala (widow of Birendra

Singha) made a profound impression upon my youthful imagination."[29]

Some Bengali poems of the period gave a clarion call to patriotism. Rangalal's famous ode to Liberty is a notable instance. Its opening line, which has been in the mouth of every Bengali ever since its composition, may be translated as follows : "Breathes there the man who would like to live, though shorn of liberty"? And this was put in the mouth of a Rajput fighting for his country against the Muslims. Nabin Chandra Sen, another famous poet of Bengal, wrote a long poem on the occasion of the visit of the Prince of Wales (future Edward VII) to India. He makes Mother India recount in stirring verses to her guest her lost glory of the past and the heroic achievements of the Marathas, Sikhs, and her other children, but no mention is made of the Muslims. But the broad western type of nationalism which embraced India as a whole, irrespective of creeds and communities, was also faithfully reflected in Bengali literature. The greatest name in the field is that of Hem Chandra Banerji whose national poems, now become almost classic, drew a lurid picture of the Indians as contrasted with the Chinese and even the "uncivilised Japanese", who were free nations while India was asleep. The burthen of his poems was a passionate appeal to India to awake and arise. His brilliant satire on the Anglo-Indian agitation against the Ilbert Bill and the presentation of the ladies of his family to the Prince of Wales by a Bengali gentleman of Calcutta are really strong appeals to the national sentiments and feelings of self-respect of the Indians.

Sri Bipin Chandra Pal describes as follows Hem Chandra's influence upon him :

"Hem Chandra, however, was our special favourite. The intense patriotic passion that breathed through his poems captured our youthful minds in a way which no other

Bengalee poems had done. The new generation of English-educated Bengalees had already commenced to advance themselves to positions of trust and responsibility in the new Administration. In the learned professions of law and medicine also, they were gradually asserting themselves as against the British members. A new spirit of independence and self-assertion was increasingly manifesting itself in the conduct and conversations of the English-educated Bengalee. All these had already commenced to provoke a racial conflict in the country. Hem Chandra was, in a special sense, the poet of this new conflict and of the racial self-respect and sensitive patriotism, born of it."[30]

The new-born patriotism and national sentiments found expression in, and were deeply stimulated by, a number of beautiful national songs which have survived to the present day. The Bengali dramas and the public stage also played a great part in fostering the national sentiments. There were social dramas written with the deliberate object of drawing pointed attention to the many social evils which were eating into the vitals of the nation, for in those days a new passion for freedom,—personal, social, and political—had possessed the Bengali mind. But there were also dramas with a distinctly national appeal. Reference may be made to the *Bharata-mata* (Mother India) which proclaimed the gospel of the religion of motherland. The following specimen of a song from this drama illustrates the anguish of a patriot's heart which it was the deliberate design of the author to evoke :

"O India, gloomy is thy face,
Beautiful that was as the moon ;
Tears flow from thine eyes
Throughout day and night."

Some of the worst evils of the British rule which deeply stirred the feelings of the people formed the theme of dramas. The best illustration is *Nila-darpana* by Dina-

bandhu Mitra which depicted the terrible oppression of the indigo-planters. Bipin Chandra Pal writes in his autobiography :

"When it was put upon the Board of the new Bengali theatres, the audience got wild with passion against the White Planters, and sometimes they so far forgot themselves that they threw their shoes at the poor actor on the stage."[31]

In general, the Bengali dramas, unable, on account of press laws, to portray directly sentiments and actions against the British, took to a subterfuge. They either portrayed heroic historical fights by the Rajputs against the Muslims who invaded or conquered their motherland, or invented purely imaginary tales of struggle against foreign rulers or conquerors. The scenes, speeches and actions were devised in such a manner that no spectator was under any illusion as to the real objective.

The glaring evils of the British rule were overtly or covertly emphasized in poems, dramas, novels, and songs. Reference may be made to one particular national song which openly condemned foreign economic exploitation. The burthen of it was that India was becoming poorer and poorer every day owing to the loss of her national freedom. It was from a novel by Babu Manmohan Bose, *Bangadhipa-parajaya*, depicting the conquest of Bengal by a foreign people who came from a high island in the sea (Tunga-dvipa). "The weaver and the blacksmith are crying day and night. They cannot earn their food by plying their trade. Even threads and needles come from distant shores. Even match-sticks are not produced in the country. Whether in dressing themselves or producing their domestic utensils or even in lighting their oil-lamps,—in nothing are the people independent of their foreign masters......Swarms of locusts from a distant island coming to these shores have eaten up all its solid grains leaving only the chaff for the starving children of the soil."[32]

History was also enlisted in the cause of nationalism. As Bengal had no knowledge in those days of her own great heroes, the lives of Rajput, Maratha and Sikh heroes took their place. The patriotism of Rana Pratap and the heroic deeds of Shivaji were household words in Bengal. It would be difficult to find in any literature such stirring poems as Rabindra Nath Tagore wrote on Shivaji and the Sikh Gurus, Banda and Guru Govinda,

Indian nationalism was fostered by a number of remarkable personalities. One of the foremost among them was Surendra Nath Banerji. He passed the Civil Service Examination in 1869, but was dismissed from service in 1874 for what is now generally regarded as a very minor offence of a technical character. He then devoted himself to political work and consecrated his life to the service of the motherland. He was an eloquent speaker and his lectures produced a remarkable effect upon young students. He soon established his position as the leader of a new youth movement which practically supplanted the new religious movement of Keshab Chandra Sen which had hitherto caught the imagination of young Bengal.

The spirit of freedom which had been dominating the educated intelligentsia of Bengal was largely diverted from religious and social spheres and "found a new and larger scope for its fulfilment in the political propaganda initiated by Surendranath. It was nothing short of a silent but powerful revolution in the intellectual atmosphere in Bengal which gave a great stimulus to the newly awakened sense of national and patriotic fervour."[33]

A great nationalist leader, who was a young college student in those days, has recorded the deep impression produced on the student community by the lectures of Surendra Nath. The very first lecture on the 'Rise of the Sikh Power', says Mr. B.C. Pal, "made a very powerful appeal to our infant patriotism and lent new strength and

even bitterness to the anti-British feeling that had already commenced to possess our youthful minds". The audience, we are told, "carried with them from this meeting a new patriotic fervour."[34]

"But the greatest and the most inspiring message of Surendra Nath's early propaganda was delivered through his lectures on Joseph Mazzini and the Young Italy movement organised by him. Mazzini's life and particularly his extremely sensitive patriotism which so worked upon his youthful imagination that even as a school boy he refused to join in any form of gaiety of his family and his community in the face of the bondage in which his country lay under Austrian domination, drew out all the latent passion for national freedom in us. The tyrannies of the Austrian army of occupation in Italy, who showed scant regard for the ordinary rights and liberties of the Italian people and treated even the Italian intellectuals of the middle class as members of an inferrior race, indeed literally as helots and slaves, made a profound impression upon our sensitive minds. Neither the person nor the property of the Italian in the neighbourhood of the Austrian military camps, nor even the honour of their women, were safe from the wanton insults and outrages of Austrian officers and soldiers. We saw or imagined a great similitude between the position of the Italians under Austrian domination and our own position under British rule. In the outlying districts in cases between Europeans and Indians the latter could hope to receive practically no justice. The differential treatment accorded to Indians and Europeans even when they happened to be members of the same Covenanted Civil Service rankled in our heart. The plight of the indentured labourers in the tea gardens of Assam had already commenced to be agitated in our vernacular press. The "*Amrita Bazar Patrika*" was circulating broadcast tales of magisterial highhandedness all over the province. All these

things working upon our youthful imagination created a profound sympathy in us with the struggle for national freedom in Italy led by Mazzini, when the story was presented to us by Surendra Nath."[35]

Another effect of Surendra Nath's lecture on Mazzini, although little noticed at the time, and less known in later days, was big with future consequences. The familiarity of young Bengalis with the young Italy Movement led to the growth of secret political societies. Here also let Bipin Chandra Pal speak of his own youthful days :

"We commenced to read the writings of Mazzini and the history of the Young Italy movement. Here we saw also the earlier organisations for Italian freedom, particularly those of the Carbonari, with which Mazzini had himself been associated at the beginning of his patriotic career. The Carbonari were secret societies. They hoped to win their national freedom by covering the whole country with a network of secret revolutionary organisations, whose idea was to free their fatherland from the Austrian yoke by striking at the Austrian rulers. Secret assassinations were the main objective of these Carbonari organisations.

"But though without any real revolutionary motive or any plan of secret assassinations as the way to national emancipation, the new inspiration imparted to Young Bengal by Surendra Nath's presentation of the life of Mazzini and the Italian Freedom Movement led many of us to form secret organisations. Calcutta student community was at that time almost honeycombed with these organisations. Secrecy has a strange fascination for youthful minds. And this was the psychology of our penchant for these secret societies. Surendra Nath was himself, I think, the President of quite a number of these secret societies."[36]

Surendra Nath's idea of nationality was of the western type, being predominantly political and free from any Hindu bias. In a speech he delivered in 1878 he urged the young men

of India to dedicate their lives for the good of their country and laid special emphasis on the unity among different communities.

Here are a few passages :

"Young men, your country expects great things from you. Now I ask, how many of you are prepared, when you have finished your studies at the College, to devote your lives, to consecrate your energies to the good of your country (cries of "all", "all")......There comes a time in the history of a nation's progress, when every man may verily be said to have a mission of his own to accomplish. Such a time has now arrived for India. The fiat has gone forth. The celestial mandate has been issued that every Indian must now do this duty, or stand condemned before God and man. There was such a time of stirring activity in the glorious annals of England when......(refers to Hampden, Algernon Sydney and the Seven Bishops)......

"It is not indeed necessary for us to have recourse to violence in order to obtain the redress of our grievances. Constitutional agitation will secure for us those rights, the privileges which in less favoured countries are obtained by sterner means. But peaceful as are the means to be enforced, there is a stern duty to be performed by every Indian. And he who fails in that duty is a traitor before God and man.

"Three hundred years ago, in the Punjab, the immortal founder of Sikhism, the meek. the gentle, the blessed Nanak preached the great doctrine of unity and endeavoured to knit together Hindus and Musulmans under the banner of a common faith. That attempt was eminently successful. Nanak became the spiritual founder of the Sikh Empire. He preached the great doctrine of peace and goodwill between Hindus and Musulmans, And standing in the presence of his great example we too must preach the great doctrine of peace and goodwill between Hindus and

Musulmans, Christians and Parsees, aye between all sections of the great Indian Community.......

"In the name; then, of a common country, let us all, Hindus, Musulmans, Christians, Parsees, members of the great Indian Community, throw the pall of oblivion over jealousies and dissensions of bygone times and embracing one another in fraternal love and affection, live and work for the benefit of our beloved fatherland".[37]

The eloquence of Surendra Nath and the voice of many other leaders put this broad view of nationalism in the forefront of young India, and it had irresistible force in the political evolution of India.

The great leaders of Bengal had hitherto laid stress on social, religious and personal freedom. The emphasis of Surendra Nath's appeal was far more on political freedom. This constitutes his principal coutribution to the political regeneration of Bengal. He brought a new message and inspiration of political freedom and carried young Bengal with him. Bepin Chandra Pal, himself a Brahma, admits that "Surendranath's political propaganda gathered a much larger following than that of the religious and social revolt of Keshab Chandra Sen and Brahmo Samaj."[38]

Another great personality who advanced the cause of nationalism in India broadbased on the unity of all communities was Mahadev Govinda Ranade (1842-1901). He held the office of a Subordinate Judge under the Government of Bombay and could not therefore take any active part in politics. But he devoted himself to the social and economic uplift of the country. In respect of social reform he steered a middle course between the overzealous enthusiasts who would rather secede from the Hindu Society than tolerate its evils, and the orthodox who would oppose any reform.[39]

Ranade made a deep study of the economic problems of India and advocated a vigorous policy of industrial and

commercial development. In 1890 he inaugurated the Industrial Association of Western India. His life and activities were not so spectacular as those of Surendra Nath Banerji, but like the latter he greatly advanced the cause of nationalism and inspired and initiated men like Gokhale to the service of the motherland.

In general it may be said that the further development of nationalism was mainly due to the rapid expansion of those very influences which gave birth to it. Among these specific mention may be made of the English education and the impact of Western culture, religious and social reforms, vernacular literature, press and periodical literature, and political associations and organizations, which have been dealt with separately in different sections. The phenomenal growth of the Bengali literature and its reaction on the development of nationalism has been sketched above. In the same way the rapid expansion of English education through the universities established in 1857 served as a potent instrument for developing nationalist ideas on a very much wider scale than before. Bankim Chandra Chatterji, one of the earliest products of the Calcutta University, made a philosophic study of nationalism as an abstract idea. His view on nationalism has been quoted above.[40] Nobody can possibly fail to understand that in all this abstract discussion his main objective was to draw the public attention to the case of India. This is rendered crystal clear when Bankim Chandra adds that neither of the two elements of nationalism mentioned by him was ever present in India. This he seeks to prove by reference to the events of Indian history and concludes that the ideas of independence and nationalism were unknown in India and have been taught to the Indians by the English. Tilak's searching analysis of the profound effect of English education on the growth of patriotism and nationalism, even so late as the eighties of the nineteenth century, has been

quoted above. The great poet Rabindra Nath has described in his inimitable way the inspiration he received from the English literature in his younger days, i. e. in the seventies and eighties.

"When I was young", he writes, "we were all full of admiration for Europe, with its high civilization and its vast scientific progress, and especially for England, which had brought this knowledge to our own doors. We had come to know England through her glorious literature, which had brought a new inspiration into our young lives. The English authors, whose books and poems we studied, were full of love for humanity, justice, and freedom.

"This great literary tradition had come down to us from the revolution period. We felt its power in Wordsworth's sonnets about human liberty. We gloried in it even in the immature productions of Shelley, written in the enthusiasm of youth, when he declared against the tyranny of priestcrafts and preached the overthrow of all despotisms through the power of suffering bravely endured.

"All this fired our youthful imaginations. We believed with all our simple faith that even if we rebelled against foreign rule, we should have the sympathy of the West. We felt that England was on our side in wishing us to gain our freedom."[41]

A vernacular paper in Bengal expressed almost a religious reverence for the Englishmen. "It is their Wilberforces, Hampdens, Mills, Brights, Metcalfes, Macaulays, and hundreds of other great men, whose liberal principles have captivated us, and we have regarded them as the very model of morality, and hold them in veneration".

The discontent and disaffection of the people, the nature of which has been described above, continued throughout the 19th century and helped the growth of Indian nationalism. In some respects the discontent grew deeper and particularly affected the English-educated classes. They had

implicit faith in the British sense of justice and fondly hoped that as soon as they would prove themselves fit, they would be entrusted with a large share in the administration of their own country. In this they were sorely disappointed. All the higher offices were practically kept as close reserve for Englishmen ; for, although they were theoretically open to all, it was very difficult for Indian students to compete successfully with English boys in the examinations for recruitment held in London, and special difficulties were deliberately created in order to keep down the number of successful Indian candidates as low as possible. It also gradually became obvious that Britain was determined to exploit the economic resources of India for her own advantage and use her political authority to smother the infant industries in India. India's cottage industries were ruined at the beginning of the British rule, and no effort was made by the Government to replace them by machine industries. Rather, when the Indians started some cotton mills by their own effort, the British rulers, at the bidding of Manchester, sought to cripple them by imposing excise duty—a measure against which protest was recorded even by the members of the Governor-General's Executive Council. The only occupation left to the people was agriculture, but the high assessment of land revenue impoverished the peasantry. There was, besides, enormous drain of wealth from India to Britain. As a result of all this India, which was one of the richest countries in the world at the beginning of the British rule became the poorest in course of a century. The extreme poverty of the people led to frequent recurrence of famines devastating large areas in India. Even in normal times more than three-fourths of people could not secure two square meals a day and almost perpetually lived in a semi-starving condition. These facts, prominently brought to the notice of the Indian public by writers like Dadabhai Naoroji, created a strong revulsion

against British rule. This was further intensified by the British policy of keeping India in perpetual subjection. Some British statesmen openly declared that India has been conquered by the sword and shall be maintained by the sword. The Indians gradually came to realize more and more that the British rule held out no hope to them either for the present or for the future.

The racial arrogance of the Englishmen and their rude behaviour to the natives were no less galling to the Indians than the openly declared policy of British imperialism to keep India in perpetual slavery. Even Englishmen holding the rank of Governor-General in India or Cabinet Minister in Britain did not scruple to denounce the Indians as despised barbarians with hardly any culture and civilization, and almost as brutes. No wonder that the average Englishmen kept the natives at arm's length (except when they chose to kick or beat them), and had no social relations with them. This social exclusiveness particularly wounded the susceptibilities of those Indians who happened to live for some time in England. Being treated on an equal footing in English society there, it was galling to them to find the doors of English clubs and even of private English families barred against them ; there were, no doubt, exceptions, but they merely proved the general rule.

The rudeness of Englishmen was not infrequently manifested in their insolent treatment to Indians in railway compartments and public thoroughfares, where even gentlemen of high rank were openly insulted and sometimes even assaulted, almost always with impunity. The Indians of common rank, particularly the servants of the Englishmen, were often administered kicks and beatings which sometimes led to their death, and the criminals escaped due punishment on account of their white skin, on the specious plea that their black-skinned victims really died of the rupture of weak spleen. Numerous instances of such arrogance and cruelty

on the part of Englishmen have been recorded, among others, by Englishmen themselves. Particular classes of Englishmen in India were notorious for systematic ill treatment and cruelty towards Indians. The tea-planters in Assam treated the labourers in their gardens as serfs and slaves, and their brutal conduct to 'Indian coolie'—both men and women—has become a bye-word of reproach in India. In almost all these cases the offenders went practically unpunished, for the English judges and jurors, who alone could try them, would not normally convict their own countrymen. A single authentic instance may be quoted to indicate the enormity of such crimes. A woman labourer in tea-garden was stripped and flogged by the garden overseer but he was acquitted on the ground that he acted under the orders of the European manager, and no further action was taken. The Chief Commissioner of Assam—who has himself narrated the story presumably as an instance of his unusual nobility of conduct—read about the incident in a vernacular newspaper and asked the Magistrate to prosecute the manager. But as the Magistrate was likely to acquit the manager, the Chief Commissioner wrote to the Magistrate 'privately and confidentially', instructing him to impose a fine equal to a month's salary. Thus according to the head of the Province and the highest court in India (which upheld the sentence on appeal, much to the surprise and indignation of the Englishmen), the most shameful public outrage on an Indian woman did not deserve a higher penalty than a fine equivalent to a month's salary. There is another case on record in which an Englishman who had flogged a coolie to death was, to the general surprise of all—both Indians and Englishmen—found guilty by the jury and sentenced to 18 months' simple imprisonment, but the High Court acquitted him.

The outrages perpetrated by the indigo-planters in Bengal constitute one of the blackest chapters in the history

of British rule in India. The cultivators were forced to sow indigo against their will though it meant a heavy loss to them ; recalcitrant cultivators were arrested, severely beaten, tortured, and confined in the dark dungeons of the factories for months ; their houses were burnt ; and it was frequently alleged that the modesty of their women was outraged. All this was not unoften done with the connivance, if not with the active support, of the British officials. At last unable to bear the oppression which went on for half a century the Bengali cultivators organized themselves in 1858 and refused in a body not to cultivate their lands with indigo even "at the sacrifice of their hearth and home, nay of their lives". This heroic stand. which was rewarded with success. had also a bearing on the future struggle for freedom in India.

The following passage in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of 22 May, 1874, clearly elucidates this wiew, as it struck a contemporary young Bengali patriot.

"It was the indigo disturbances which first taught the natives the value of combination and political agitation. Indeed it was the first revolution in Bengal after the advent of the English. If there be a second revolution it will be to free the nation from the death grips of the all-powerful police and district Magistrate. Nothing like oppression ! It was the oppression which brought about the glorious revolution in England and it was the oppression of half a century by indigo planters which at last roused the half-dead Bengalee and infused spark in his cold frame."

The following extracts from the evidence of Reverend James Long, before *the Indigo Commission*, in 1860 are equally interesting.

"Missionary preachers, even in Calcutta, are sometimes met with a remark : "Why do you not tell your country-men, the indigo planters, to be less oppressive ? Go preach to them first". And I have frequently heard even boys in

Missionary schools say : "Why are your Christian countrymen as bad as we are, and yet you say, your religion is better than ours".

"The lower orders of Bengalees have lately adopted more independent habits of thought....It has had much to do with the immediate causes of the opposition to indigo planting; it will not cease here, but will, I believe, have a very important social influence on the mass of the people freeing them from a slavish feeling, and showing them that they can, in various cases, declare terms to the Europeans.

"English education, happily spreading in the country among the natives, is giving them a sense of freedom, leavening their minds with a regard to a sense of justice and imparting to them an English tone of revulsion against oppression. It is also welding the natives of the different Presidencies into one patriotic mass, with a community of feelings on Indian subjects......This influence is radiating downwards. The substance of these newspapers and pamphlets in English is being communicated orally or by means of translation to the masses of the people.

"The vernacular press is rising into great importance, as a genuine exponent of native opinions, and it is to be regretted that the European community pay so little regard to its admonitions and warnings. Books treating on native and political subjects are purchased with avidity. The progress of the vernacular press in Calcutta may be thus shown:

Works printed for *sale* were	
In 1826	8,000 copies.
In 1853	300,000 copies.
In 1857	600,000 copies.

"Bengali newspapers, such as the *Bhaskar* and *Prabhakar*, are circulated widely even as far as the Punjab. These Bengali newspapers have mofussil correspondents, who give them the news of the district, and to each Bengali news-

paper is attached a translator of English newspapers; hence the native mind is much more familiarized with political movements both in Europe and India, than the Anglo-Indian community imagines...The *amlas* of the courts, the state of the police, the character of magistrates are constant subjects of criticism in those papers....Now to my certain knowledge, indigo planting has been for the last sixteen years the subject of incessant attacks in those native newspapers, and the opinion of those papers filters down to the mass......"

The growth of Indian-owned newspapers and political associations, which will be described in the next chapter, and the development of nationalism acted and reacted upon each other.

In addition to these internal forces which worked from within, there were others supplied by current events in the history of the world. The defeat of Italy in Abyssinian War, the rise of Japan as a great power, and the defeat it inflicted upon a mighty European power like Russia had a great repercussion upon Indians. The myth of European invincibility in war against Asiatics was rudely shattered and this infused hope and faith in the heart of the Indians in their own power. The early discomfitures of the British in the Boer War were hailed with delight in India, though the Boers were no friends of India and probably hated the Indians even more than the British. Here, again, a minor power successfully defying the authority of Britain served as an object-lesson to the Indians that they could also rely on their own strength. The Irish struggle for independence against the British also served as a great inspiration to the Indians.

V. SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

The nascent nationalism in India received a great momentum from the life and activities of Swami Viveka-

nanda, the great disciple of Ramakrishna Paramahansa, to both of whom reference has been made above. Vivekananda championed the cause of Hinduism in the Parliament of Religions held at Chicago (U. S. A.) in 1893 in connection with the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America by Columbus. There, in the presence of the representatives of all the religions from almost all the countries in the world, the young monk from India expounded the principles of Vedanta and the greatness of Hinduism with such persuasive eloquence that from the very first he captivated the hearts of vast audience. It would be hardly an exaggeration to say that Swami Vivekananda made a place for Hinduism in the cultural map of the modern world. The civilized nations of the West had hitherto looked down upon Hinduism as a bundle of superstitions, evil institutions, and immoral customs, unworthy of serious consideration in the progressive world of to-day. Now, for the first time, they not only greeted, with hearty approval, the lofty principles of Hinduism as expounded by Vivekananda, but accorded a very high place to it in the cultures and civilizations of the world. The repercussion of this on the vast Hindu community can be easily imagined. The Hindu intelligentsia were always very sensitive to the criticism of the westerners, particularly the missionaries, regarding the many evils and shortcomings of the Hindu society and religion, as with their rational outlook they could not but admit the force of much of this criticism. They had always to be on the defensive and their attitude was mostly apologetic, whenever there was a comparative estimate of the values of the Hindu and Western culture. They had almost taken for granted the inferiority of their culture *vis a vis* that of the West, which was so confidently asserted by the Western scholars. Now, all on a sudden, the table was turned and the representatives of the West joined in a chorus of applause at the hidden virtues

of Hinduism which were hitherto unsuspected either by friends or foes. It not only restored the self-confidence of the Hindus in their own culture and civilization, but quickened their sense of national pride and patriotism. This sentiment was echoed and re-echoed in the numerous public addresses which were presented to Swami Vivekananda on his home-coming by the Hindus all over India, almost literally from Cape Comorin to the Himalays. It was a great contribution to the growing Hindu nationalism.

On his return to India, Swami Vivekananda preached the spiritual basis of Hindu civilization and pointed out in his writings and speeches that the spirituality of India was not less valuable, nor less important for the welfare of humanity, than the much vaunted material greatness of the West which has dazzled our eyes. He was never tired of asking the Indians to turn their eyes, dazed by the splendour of the West, to their own ideals and institutions. By a comparative estimate of the real values of the Hindu ideals and institutions and those of the West he maintained the superiority of the former and asked his countrymen never to exchange gold for tinsels. Referring to the conflict between Westernized India and the true India of the old, he said : "On one side, New India is saying : "If we only adopt Western ideas, Western language, Western food, Western dress and Western manners, we shall be strong and powerful as the Western nations ; on the other, Old India is saying : "Fools ! by imitation, other's ideas never become one's own—nothing, unless earned, is your own, Does the ass in the lion's skin become the lion ?

"On one side, New India is saying : "What the Western nations do are surely good, otherwise how did they become so great ?" On the other side, Old India is saying : "The flash of lightning is intensely bright, but only for a moment ; look out, boys, it is dazzling your eyes. Beware".

But Vivekananda was not prejudiced against the West nor insensible to the value of her achievements. He frankly admitted that Indian culture was neither spotless nor perfect. It has to learn many things from the West, but without sacrificing its true character.

Swami Vivekananda combined in himself the role of a great saint and fervid nationalist. He placed Indian nationalism on the high pedestal of past glory, and it embraced the teeming millions of India both high and low, rich and poor. He devoted his life to the awakening of national consciousness and many of his eloquent appeals would stir the national sentiments of India even today to their very depths. Here is one specimen :

"Oh India ! Wouldst thou attain, by means of thy disgraceful cowardice, that freedom deserved only by the brave and the heroic ? Oh India ! forget not that the ideal of thy womanhood is Sita, Savitri, Damayanti; forget not that the God thou worshippest is the great ascetic of ascetics, the all-renouncing Shankara, the Lord of Uma; forget not that thy marriage, thy wealth, thy life are not for sense-pleasure, are not for thy individual personal happiness; forget not that thou art born as a sacrifice to the *Mother's* altar; forget not that thy social order is but the reflex of the infinite Universal Motherhood ; forget not that the lower claases, the ignorant, the poor, the illiterate, the cobbler, the sweeper are thy flesh and blood, thy brothers. Thou brave ones, be bold, take courage, be proud that thou art an Indian, and proudly proclaim : "I am an Indian, every Indian is my brother". Say : "The ignorant Indian, the poor and destitute Indian, the Brahman Indian, the Pariah Indian, is my brother". Thou, too, clad with but a rag round thy loins proudly proclaim at the top of thy voice : "The Indian culture is my brother, the Indian is my life, India's gods and goddesses are my God, India's society is the cradle of my infancy, the pleasure-garden of my

youth, the sacred heaven, the Varanasi of my old age" Say, brother : "The soil of India is my highest heaven, the good of India is my good", and repeat and pray day and night : ,'O Thou Lord of Gauri, O Thou Mother of the Universe, vonchsafe manliness unto me. O Thou Mother of Strength, take away my weakness, take away my unmanliness, and *Make me a Man.*"[42]

Though an ascetic, Vivekananda was a patriot of patriots. The thought of restoring the pristine glory of India by resuscitating among her people the spiritual vitality which was dormant, but not dead, was always the uppermost thought in his mind. His great disciple, Sister Nivedita (an Irish lady named Margaret Noble), who was his constant companion, has remarked : "Throughout those years, in which I saw him almost daily, the thought of India was to him like the air he breathed." A saint and an ascetic have always exercised a profound influence upon Indian minds. No wonder, therefore, that the message of Vivekananda that India, with all her shortcomings, and in spite of the present dismal outlook, shall rise to the stature of a great nation in the modern world, went home and quickened the national impulses of the people of India. There seems to be a great deal of truth in the following tribute paid to him by a recent historian of India's struggle for *Swaraj* :

"Swami Vivekananda might well be called the father of modern Indian Nationalism; he largely created it and also embodied in his own life its highest and noblest elements."[43]

There is no doubt that nationalisn and patriotism were lifted to a high spiritual level by Swami Vivekananda. Although he was mainly a religious devotee and a *sanyasin* who had renounced the world, his speeches, writings and activities had a direct bearing on the devotion to motherland. He emphasized the greatness of the spiritual idea

enunciated in Vedanta, and the important role it is destined to play in elevating the whole mankind. But, he said, the great mission of India would remain unfulfilled so long as India continued in her present state of slavery and abject poverty. The political and material greatness of India was, therefore, indissolubly bound up with the spiritual re-generation of India. Vivekananda re-stated the old ideas of Vedanta in a new form. The fundamental concept of Vedanta, he reiterated, was the essential unity of God and man, and its realization by man by removing his illusion or ignorance. In the past such realization was sought through metaphysical abstractions and renunciation of social and civic life. It is against this prevailing view that Vivekananda raised his voice of protest. Realization of God is to be achieved, said he, not by retirement into hills and forests and negation of worldly life, but by the spiritualization of the normal contents and actualities of life. He put it in a more concrete form by laying emphasis on the fact that one should not run away from the world in order to seek God, but try to recognize Him in his fellow-beings, who are the images of God Himself as taught by the Vedanta. The true worship of God was therefore the service of the people. He accordingly asked every indian to realize God in the nation and to dedicate himself to its service, in a spirit of religious reverence, without any pride or fear, and irrespective of all earthly consequences. He gave a living touch to the idea by coining the word *Daridra-Narayana* i. e. the 'God symbolized in the poor and the humble.' This great *Sanyasin* who had left his hearth and home at the call of his spiritual *guru*, Shri Ramakrishna, and delved deeply into spiritual mysticism, was never tired of preaching that what India needs today is not so much religion or philosophy, of which she has enough, but food for her hungry millions, social justice for the low classes, strength and energy for her emasculated

people and a sense of pride and prestige as a great nation of the world. He made a trumpet call to all Indians to shed fear of all kinds and stand forth as men by imbibing *sakti* (energy and strength), by reminding them that they were the particles of the Divine according to the eternal truth preached by the Vedanta. The precepts and example of this great *Sanyasin* galvanized the current of national life, infused new hopes and inspirations, and placed the service to the motherland on a religious level. His voice had a special appeal to the Indians as they are always attracted by a saintly life, but his teachings, inspired by Shri Ramakrishna, were highly honoured even in Europe and America.

Swami Vivekananda thus gave a spiritual basis to Indian nationalism. The lessons of the Vedanata and *Bhagavad-Gita* permeated the lives and activities of many nationalists, and many a martyr, inspired by his teachings, endured extreme sufferings and sacrifices with a cheerful heart, fearlessly embraced death, and calmly bore the inhuman tortures, worse than death, which were sometimes inflicted upon them.

A review of the progress of nationalism in India was made by Gokhale, while inaugurating the Servants of India Society in 1905, in the following passage: "The growth, during the last fifty years, of a feeling of common nationality, based upon common tradition, common disabilities and common hopes and aspirations, has been most striking. The fact that we are Indians first, and Hindoos, Mahomedans, Parsees, or Christians afterwards, is being realised in a steadily increasing measure, and the idea of a united and renovated India, marching onwards to a place among the nations of the world worthy of her great past, is no longer a mere idle dream of a few imaginative minds, but is the definitely accepted creed of those who form the brain of the community—the educated classes of the country."[44]

The most significant trait of the new nationalism was an intense love of the motherland, based on a conception of its past glory and future greatness. But it was often distinguished from patriotism of the Western type by being elevated to a high spiritual level. This was preached by Vivekananda and illustrated by Bankim Chandra in his famous novel, *Anandamath*, to which reference has been made above. He has depicted therein the lives of a band of *sanyasins* who dedicated their lives to the service of their motherland. She was not only represented by the image of Kali, the source of all power and energy, but the only form of worship acceptable to her was the selfless service to the motherland—no other deity and no other worship were known to them. Thus Bankim Chandra converted patriotism into religion and religion into patriotism.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale tried to give a practical shape to this ideal by founding the Servants of India Society in 1905. After describing the progress of nationalism in the extract quoted above, he observes : "The results achieved so far are undoubtedly most gratifying, but they only mean that the jungle has been cleared, and the foundations laid. The great work of rearing the superstructure has yet to be taken in hand.........One essential condition of success is that a sufficient number of our countrymen must now come forward to devote themselves to the cause in the spirit in which religious work is undertaken. Public life must be spiritualised. Love of country must so fill the heart that all else shall appear as of little moment by its side. A fervent patriotism which rejoices at every opportunity of sacrifice for the motherland, a dauntless heart which refuses to be turned back from its object by difficulty or danger, a deep faith in the purpose of Providence that nothing can shake—equipped with these, the worker must start on his mission and reverently seek the joy which comes of spending oneself in the service of one's country."[45]

The object of the Servants of India Society was to train such men—men who should be "prepared to devote their lives to the cause of the country in a religious spirit", and "as national missionaries promote by all constitutional means the national interests of the Indian people." Every member of the society had to take seven vows at the time of admission. The first four of these are : (1) That the country will always be the first in his thoughts and he will give to her service the best that is in him. (2) That in serving the country he will seek no personal advantage for himself. (3) That he will regard all Indians as brothers, and will work for the advancement of all, without distinction of caste or creed. (4) That he will be content with such provision for himself and his family, if he has any, as the Society may be able to make. He will devote no part of his energies to earning money for himself.

CHAPTER III.

DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL IDEAS AND ORGANIZATIONS (1858-85)

A. BENGAL

As an inevitable consequence of the growth of nationalism, described in the preceding chapter, there was a forward movement in political ideas and organizations in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Hitherto the political ambitions of the Indians did not go much beyond administrative reforms with a view to securing more powers for the Indians, but gradually they were inspired by higher ambitions to which expression has been given by Surendra Nath in the following passage : "It was not enough that we should have our full share of the higher offices, but we aspired to have a voice in the councils of the nation. There was the bureaucracy. For good or evil, it was there. We not only wanted to be members of the bureaucracy and to leaven it with the Indian element, but we looked forward to controlling it, and shaping and guiding its measures and eventually bringing the entire administration under complete popular domination. It was a new departure hardly noticed at the time, but fraught with immense potentialities. Along with the development of struggle for place and power to be secured to our countrymen, there came gradually but steadily to the forefront the idea that this was not enough, that it was part, but not even the most vital part of the programme for the political elevation of our people. The demand for representative government was now definitely formulated, and it was but the natural and legitimate product of the public activities that had preceded it."[1]

The idea of a representative Government was not, however, a new thing in Bengal politics. A demand for it was included in the petition of the British Indian Association, Calcutta, to the British Parliament, in 1852[2]. On July 25, 1867, W. C. Bonnerjea, who afterwards became the First President of the Indian National Congress (1885), delivered in England a long speech on "representative and responsible Government of India". He made the concrete suggestion of setting up a Representative Assembly and a Senate in India with a power of vetoing their decisions given to both the Governor-General and the Crown.[3]

Seven years later Krishtodas Pal, the veteran politician of Bengal, recommended a similar constitutional Government for India. In 1874 in a leading article in the *Hindoo Patriot* on the "Home Rule for India", he observed: "Our attention should, therefore, be directed to Home Rule for India, to the introduction of constitutional government for India. Most of the British colonies have been blessed with constitutional Government, but India is the only dependency which, despite the vastness of its area, its population and interests, is denied the privilege. If taxation and representation go hand in hand in all British Colonies, why should this principle be ignored in British India?... Home Rule for India ought to be our cry, and it ought to be based upon the same constitutional basis that is recognised in the Colonies".[4]

The existing political associations did not prove equal to the task of pursuing this higher ideal, and so a few advanced political thinkers of Bengal started in 1875 a new association, called 'India League', in order "to stimulate the sense of nationalism amongst the people" and awaken political consciousness among them. The organizers rightly claimed that "this is the first instance of a political body formed by public announcement and a call upon the nation to attend it and mould it to their liking."[5] Even the Anglo-

Indian Daily of Calcutta, the *Englishman*, referred to this new political organization as "the first marked sign of the awakening of the people on this side of India to political life."[6] The 'India League' had a brief but useful career. It was shortly supplanted by another political organization which proved to be more durable. This new organization, promoted by several leaders of advanced political thought, headed by Surendra Nath, was inaugurated in a public meeting held at the Albert Hall, Calcutta, on July 26, 1876, which was attended by more than seven hundred persons. The new organization was named 'Indian Association' for reasons which Surendra Nath himself explains as follows :

"The idea that was working in our minds was that the Association was to be the centre of an all-India movement. For even then, the ceonception of a united India, derived from the inspiration of Mazzini, or, at any rate, of bringing all India upon the same common political platform, had taken firm possession of the minds of the Indian leaders in Bengal. We accordingly resolved to call the new political body the Indian Association."[7] Surendra Nath also defines the object of this Association in the following words :

"(1) The creation of a strong body of public opinion in the country ; (2) the unification of the Indian races and peoples upon the basis of common politicat interests and aspirations ; (3) the promotion of friendly feeling between Hindus and Muhammadans ; and, lastly, the inclusion of the masses in the great public movements of the day."[8]

One of the important topics which engaged the attention of the Indian Association was the new regulation reducing the age-limit of the competitors for the Indian Civil Service Examination from 21 to 19. It was bound to prove a great handicap to Indian candidates, and was no doubt deliberately intended to reduce their chance of

success. The Indian Association took up this question in right earnest and held a public meeting in Calcutta to enter an emphatic protest against it. In order to give an all-India character to the agitation the Association had sent letters to the different Provinces asking for their opinion, and letters and telegrams from leaders of different regions of India, protesting against the reactionary measure, were read at the public meeting. This is the beginning of a novel feature in the political agitation of the country which soon became almost a normal procedure. Backed by the united voice of India the Calcutta meeting decided to send a memorial to the British Parliament, praying that the maximum age-limit for the I. C. S. Examination be raised to twenty-two years, and that the examination be simultaneously held in London and one or more centres in India. This is the beginning of that demand for simultaneous I. C. S. Examinations in India and England which continued to be urged throughout the nineteenth century.

Apart from the great importance of this question, the organizers of the meeting had other ulterior motives. The meeting was held ostensibly to protest against the age-limit of the I. C. S. Examination, but as Surendra Nath put it, "the underlying conception, and the true aim and purpose, of the Civil Service agitation was the awakening of a spirit of unity and solidarity among the people of India". The meeting accordingly decided "to bring the various Indian provinces upon the same common platform (a thing that has never been attempted before) and to unite them through the sense of a common grievance and the inspiration of a common resolve".[9] Thus an ill-conceived administrative measure led to the organization of what may be justly regarded as the first political movement on an all-India basis.

The task of carrying out this higher purpose was entrusted to Surendra Nath, and he was appointed a special

delegate to visit the different parts of India. Surendra Nath discharged this onerous duty with great ability and industry. He left Calcutta on May 26, 1877, and made a prolonged tour in Upper India, visiting Banaras, Allahabad, Kanpur, Lakhnau, Aligarh, Delhi, Agra, Meerut, Amritsar and Lahore. Next year he made a similar tour in the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay. At all these places he addressed crowded public meetings which endorsed the resolutions pased at the Calcutta public meeting. But he did something more. At Allahabad, Kanpur, Lakhnau, Meerut and Lahore he organized new political associations to act in concert with the Indian Association of Calcutta. The existing political organizations in other places also agreed to make a common cause. The foundation of concerted political action was thus well and truly laid.[10]

The propaganda tour of Surendra Nath Banerji from one end of India to another constitutes a definite landmark in the history of India's political progress. It clearly demonstrated that in spite of differences in language, creed, and social institutions, the English-educated people of this great sub-continent were bound by a common tie of ideals and interest, creating a sense of underlying unity which enabled them to combine for a common political objective. For the first time within living memory, or even historical tradition, there emerged the idea of India over and above the congeries of States and Provinces into which it was divided. The stage was thus set for a political organization embracing the whole of India which came into being in less than a decade.

The Indian Association found a new scope of activity in another reactionary measure of the Government. This was the Vernacular Press Act which was passed by Lord Lytton's Government. Its object was to muzzle the newspapers in Indian languages which spread the message of nationality and the newly awakened sense of political cons-

ciousness. The venom of Government's wrath fell on Bengali papers, cuttings of which were sedulously collected to justify the new oppressive measure. It was generally believed at the time that the object of the Government was to stop the publication of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, an outspoken weekly edited by the famous Ghosh brothers, to whom reference will be made later. The Vernacular Press Act was passed by the Supreme Council in one sitting, on March 14,1878. It was followed during the same year by other reactionary measures such as the Arms Act and the License Act.

The Indian Association held public meetings to protest against all these obnoxious measures, and in particular carried on a vigorous agitation against the Vernacular Press Act which sought to cut at the very root of the nascent spirit of nationalism and political activity in India. As on the previous occasion of protest against new I. C. S. regulation, a public meeting was held in Calcutta, intimations of which were sent to other Provinces. This meeting, held in the Town Hall, was attended by about five thousand men, and this was an indication of the growth in the political consciousness of the people. The British Indian Association held aloof, but all other shades of opinion were represented. Letters and telegrams were received from leaders and political associations all over India, supporting the object of the meeting. Those who had discerning eyes could see in this meeting the passing away of the political leadership into the hands of the middle class intelligentsia from those of the old landed aristocracy and other vested interests.

The sequel of this meeting is of great political interest. A petition against the Vernacular Press Act was approved by the meeting and sent to the famous British statesman Gladstone, who was then the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons. Gladstone moved a Resolution in the House which was fully debated. It was bound to

be lost, but the amazing thing was that out of 360 members present, 152 members voted in favour of it.[11] In other words, it was definitely accepted as a party question. The Indian Association might well congratulate itself on the success achieved. Once more the whole of political India was united in a common effort, and the Indian point of view was presented before the British Parliament in a manner which had no precedent. It may be added that the agitation carried on by the Indian Association was not altogether fruitless, for some sections of the Act were modified.

The success thus achieved led the Indian Association to a still greater adventure. It had been proposed by them to send a memorial to the Parliament on the Civil Service question, and a draft of the memorial was approved by the various public meetings in different Provinces of India addressed by Surendra Nath. It was now decided that instead of sending the memorial by post it should be carried by a delegate in person, who would be in a position to explain the grievances of India to the British public. The expenses of this costly undertaking were met by a public-spirited lady, Maharani Swarnamoyee of Bengal, and Lal Mohan Ghosh was chosen as the delegate. Ghosh addressed a public meeting in Willis' rooms, House of Commons, on July 23, 1879, and his eloquent speech, followed by the sympathetic remarks of the Chairman, John Bright, created a profound impression upon the English audience. As Surendra Nath remarks: "The effect of that meeting was instantaneous. Within twenty-four hours of it, there were laid on the table of the House of Commons the rules creating what was subsequently known as the Statutory Civil Service".[12]

The most interesting thing about the success of Lal Mohan Ghosh was the spirit in which it was received all over India. On his return to India he was accorded a

public reception at Bombay. While welcoming him the Chairman of the meeting observed that although Lal Mohan "went from Calcutta, he no less represented other parts of India as well,—that he was returning not as a delegate, simply of Calcutta, but as a delegate of Western India as well". The whole audience cheered this remark with loud applause,—a small but significant act which shows how rapidly the seeds of an all-India political consciousness which Surendra Nath had sown in course of his Indian tour, had germinated on the favourable soil.

Lal Mohan Ghosh fully justified his choice as a delegate and was highly imbued with patriotic fervour. He tersely but correctly expressed the ideals of the age when he said: "It is for us to transform the tiny brook of a feeble public opinion into the rushing torrent of a mighty national demonstration." Lal Mohan himself and many others, both in Bengal and in other Provinces of India, made valuable contribution to the realization of this ideal during the decade 1875-1885.

The efforts of the Indian Association to stimulate political consciousness of the people were aided by two notable events in 1883. The first was the great controversy over a legislative measure introduced by Mr. Ilbert, the Law Member of the Viceroy's Council, and hence popularly known as the Ilbert Bill. In those days the European British subjects enjoyed the privilege of trial by a judge of their own race, and hence Indian Civilians, even though they might hold the rank of Magistrates or Sessions Judges, could not try any European criminal. The Ilbert Bill sought to withdraw this privilege in order to remove a galling and glaring instance of racial inequality. Reference has been made above to a similar attempt on the part of the Government in 1849, and the howling agitation of the Anglo-Indians against what they called the "Black Acts", which eventually led to the withdrawal of the meas-

ures. The same type of violent agitation, but far more intense and rowdy in character, was carried on in 1883 against the Ilbert Bill by the Englishmen in India. They organized a Defence Association with branches all over the country, and collected a lakh and a half of Rupees to conduct a campaign of vilification against the Indians. All notions of decency were cast aside and the abuse and filthy language uttered by the English speakers were most shocking. One Mr. Branson, Bar-at-Law, obtained unenviable notoriety for his vemomous attacks against the Indians. The Indian Association carried on a counter-agitation and Lal Mohan Ghosh paid Branson back in his own coin. The Indian public associations of Bengal and Bombay fought hard for the Bill, and a joint representation was made by them to the Viceroy. But nothing availed. The Government had to yield to the violence of the Englishmen, and though the Bill was not withdrawn, it was changed beyond recognition and served no useful purpose when passed into law. One sinister aspect of the Government attitude has been emphasized by Blunt. The Government, he said, "gave way before the clamour of an insignificant section of the public, abetted by the sworn enemies of all reform in India—the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy". In support of the accusation he mentions the following : "Dr. Sandwal (Sanyal ?) gave me particulars about the pressure which had been put lately on native officials about it (Ilbert Bill). A friend of his, holding a minor post under Government, had received a demi-official letter from his English superior warning him that if he attended meetings in favour of the Bill he should suffer for it."[13] The whole agitation left behind it a rankling sensation of defeat. disgrace, and humiliation in the hearts of the Indians, and an increased degree of racial arrogance in the minds of the Englishmen. But every cloud has a silver lining. The Ilbert Bill greatly helped the cause of Indian political advance. The method which

was so successfully pursued by the Englishmen was not lost upon the Indians. They learnt the value of combination and organization in political struggle, and their eyes were opened to the ignoble status of the Indians in their own country. In spite of humiliation they learnt great lessons from the Anglo-Indians, and were not slow to profit by them. The Ilbert Bill agitation is thus another landmark in the history of India's political progress,

It is to be noted, however, that the agitation against the Ilbert Bill "stirred up the public mind only in Bengal and Bombay.........It produced little or no effect in Madras, while the N. W. Provinces and the Punjab were perfectly silent."[14] The Muslim community also held aloof. This is not an unfair index of the progress of political thought and organization in different parts and among the different communities of India.

The excitement caused by the agitation over the Ilbert Bill had hardly died down when a charge was brought against Surendra Nath Banerji for contempt of Court on account of some comments he had made on the conduct of the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court who had ordered a Hindu to produce the image of his deity in the Court. The majority of the Judges found him guilty, but the only Indian Judge dissented from this view. The case had created great sensation from the very beginning, because Norris, the Chief Justice, had taken a prominent part in the Ilbert Bill agitation. A vast crowd attended the Court during the trial, and when the sentence of two months' imprisonment was pronounced, a section of the crowd, mostly composed of students, became excited and smashed the windows of the building. Indeed so menacing was the attitude of the crowd, who had begun to pelt stones at the police, that Surendra Nath had to be removed secretly by a back-door in a private carriage instead of the prison van.

The incarceration of Surendra Nath, like the deplorable Anglo-Indian agitation against the Ilbert Bill, was not an unmixed evil, and helped the cause of India's political advance. It evoked a spontaneous protest from all sections of people in Bengal which was unprecedented in character. All business was suspended, shops were closed, and a strong wave of indignation swept the whole of Bengal and regions far outside its boundary. Numerous protest meetings were held in different towns in Bengal, and sometimes the attendance was so large that they had to be held in the open air. The meeting organized by the Indian Association was held in the Beadon Square on May 16,1883. "It was the largest meeting ever held in Calcutta. There were about twenty thousand people present representing different sections of the community; numerous telegrams and letters as well as the presence of delegates specially sent from the Muffassil on the occasion testified to the all-pervading sympathy and interest of the country". Not only the educated classes but even the masses were affected. No such upheaval was witnessed in Bengal before the days of *Swadeshi* agitation in 1905.

Far more significant was the fact that the imprisonment of Surendra Nath evoked sympathy and protest in remote parts of India, and public meetings were held in Agra, Fyzabad, Amritsar, Lahore, Poona, and various other towns all over India. Even a Pandit of Kashmir, ignorant of English, burst into tears, crying, "What have they done with our dearest brother? Our Surendra Nath is in jail." All these testify the extent to which the bonds of fellowship and good feeling between the different parts of India had been forged during the eighties of the nineteenth century. The following observations in the Annual Report of the Indian Association for 1883 are highly significant:

"That good cometh out of evil was never more fully illustrated than in this notable event. It has now been demons-

trated by the universal outburst of grief and indignation which the event called forth, that the people of the different Indian provinces have learnt to feel for one another ; and that a common bond of unity and fellow-feeling is rapidly being established among them. And Babu Surendranath Banerjea has at least one consolation, that his misfortune awakened, in a most marked form, a manifestation of that sense of unity among the different races, for the accomplishment of which he has so earnestly striven and not in vain."[15]

The incarceration of Surendra Nath produced another good result. Babu Tarapada Banerjee of Krishnagar (Nadiya Destrict, Bengal) started the idea of a National Fund as a memento of the imprisonment of Surendra Nath. He was released from jail on 4 July, 1883. On 17 July, a public meeting was held which was attended by over ten thousand people. It was resolved to raise a National Fund to secure the political advancement of the country by means of constitutional agitation in India and England. A sum of about Rs. 20,000 was collected and it was made over to the Indian Association, Calcutta, for the promotion of political work.[16]

The agitation over the Ilbert Bill and the imprisonment of Surendra Nath had one particular feature of great importance. This is the part played by the student commuity in matters of public importance which agitated the country. They took a prominent part in the organization of public meetings and openly gave vent to their feelings of resentment against the Government. Many students became victims of official repression, and many cases of harsh treatment, sometimes unduly severe, were reported in the newspapers of the time. The Government showed as much nervousness about the student agitators in 1883, as they did in the twentieth century.

The memorable events of 1883 brought into the forefront the question of a political organization of all-India

character. In spite of its remarkable achievement, the Indian Association was, after all, a provincial organization, and many felt the need of a closely knit organization embracing the whole of India. The feelings evoked by the Ilbert Bill agitation and the imprisonment of Surendra Nath seemed to be very favourable for such an attempt, and fortunately the necessary opportunity was provided by the proposal of the Government to hold an International Exhibition in Calcutta in 1883. The Indian Association naturally expected that a large number of eminent Indians would visit Calcutta on the occasion, and resolved to take advantage of it to inaugurate an all-India National Conference at that time. The idea was fully approved by all the branches of the Association in North India as well as by the leading political organizations of Bombay and Madras. Backed by this support of the country as a whole the Indian Association called the First National Conference in Calcutta to be held on December 28, 29 and 30, 1883.

The genesis of the Conference is thus described by Surendra Nath: "The idea of a National Conference is as old as the year 1877. It originated on the occasion of the Delhi assemblage, when the princes and the rulers of the land met for the purpose of a great show, and it suggested itself to the minds of many that the representatives of the people might also meet, if not for the purpose of a show, at least for the consideration and discussion of questions of national importance. That idea, however, was not realised until 1883".

"The objects of the National Conference were not sectional nor regional, but truly national". "We have met", continued Surendra Nath, "to talk, to deliberate, to consult, and if possible, to arrive at a common programme of political action. Too often our energies are frittered away in isolated and individual efforts. One Association, for instance, might be agitating for the Reform of the Civil Services,

a second for the Reconstitution of the Legislative Councils, a third for Retrenchment of Expenditure. Our idea is to bring the national forces, so to speak, into a focus ; and if possible to concentrate them upon some common object calculated to advance the public good. Such I conceive to be the prevailing idea of the Conference".[17]

The Conference was attended by more than a hundred Delegates, both Hindus and Muslims, and the places they represented, outside Bengal, included Bombay, Madras, Lahore, Allahabad, Cuttack, Jubbulpore, Nagpur, Ahmedabad, Bankipore, Muzaffarpore, Darbhanga, Deoghur, Sagar Bhagalpur, Meerut, Tejpur, Hossainpore etc.

The proceedings began with a national hymn. The questions that were taken up for discussion included Industrial and Technical education, the wider employment of Indians in Civil Service, separation of the judicial from the executive functions, Representative Government, National Fund and Arms Act.

The Conference was attended by two Englishmen, one of whom, Blunt, recorded his impressions in the following words:

"Then at twelve, I went to the first meeting of the National Conference, a really important occasion, as there were delegates from most of the great towns, and, as Bose (Ananda Mohan) in his opening speech remarked, it was the first stage towards a National Parliament."[18]

The second session of the National Conference was held in Calcutta in 1885 on December 25, 26 and 27. It was more representative than the first, being joined by the British Indian Association, representing the landed aristocracy, which had kept aloof from the first session. More than thirty political Associations all over Northern India sent their representatives.

Surendra Nath moved the first resolution on the reconstitution of the Legislative Councils in such a way

that popular opinion might be reflected in it. Among other subjects which were discussed may be mentioned the Arms Act, the Civil Service question, the separation of the judicial and executive functions, and the retrenchment of expenditure, mainly under three heads, viz., annual military expenditure, the 'home charges', and the enormous cost of civil administration. In short, almost all the questions that formed the chief planks in the Indian National Congress platform during the first twenty years of its existence were discussed in the two sessions of the National Conference.

The Indian Association wanted to give a permanent character to the Conference,. Accordingly Surendra Nath moved that a Conference of delegates from different parts of the country should be held next year. The delegates from Allahabad and Meerut lent their support to the resolution. The meeting suggested that the venue of the Conference should be changed every year and it should meet in places like Bombay, Madras, Allahabad and other great capitals of India. This resolution was carried with acclamation.

At the conclusion of the National Conference, a telegram was sent to the following effect to the political Conference about to be held at Bombay: "The delegates in conference assembled in Calcutta desire to express their deep sympathy with the approaching Conference in Bombay."[19]

This conference was the Indian National Congress. But before taking up its history it is necessary to refer briefly to the development of political organizations outside Bengal.

B. BOMBAY AND MADRAS

Next to Bengal the evolution of political ideas and organizations was more marked in Bombay than in any other part of India. This was due in no small measure

to the able leadership of the so-called Triumvirate, namely Kashinath Trimbak Telang, Pherozeshah Mehta, and Badruddin Tyabjee. Another eminent leader was Mahadev Govinda Ranade, but he was associated with social and economic, rather than political, problems.

The general trend of political ideas in Bombay during the seventies may be gathered from the speeches and activities of Pherozeshah Mehta. Like Dadabhai Naoroji, Mehta had a sincere faith in the sense of justice and fair play of the British and completely relied on them for the political salvation of India. "When in the inscrutable dispensations of Providence", said he, "India was assigned to the care of England, she decided that India was to be governed on the principles of justice, equality and righteousness without distinctions of colour, caste or creed".

He had faith in the capacity of the Indians to manage representative institutions and also believed that "the time was past when strong popular opinion on any subject could be successfully resisted by Government for any length of time."[20]

As already noted above, outside Bengal, Bombay alone was seriously perturbed by the Ilbert Bill agitation. It was mainly as a result of this that the Bombay Presidency Association came into being. The oldest political association in Bombay, the Bombay Association, founded in 1852, had lost its vitality within a decade, and though "revived in 1870 and galvanised into fresh life by Mr. Naoroji Furdunji in 1873, it shortly became practically extinct."[21] This was partly due to the fact that a Branch of the East India Association of London was founded in Bombay in 1871 and carried on useful work in developing political ideas. But its useful career came to an end along with that of the parent body in London, to which reference will be made later.

After making vain efforts to put fresh life into these two political organizations, Mehta, Tyabji and Telang con-

ceived the idea of starting a new political association in Bombay. For this purpose they convened a public meeting on January 31,1885, which was attended by a large number of persons representing all classes and shades of opinion. The Bombay Presidency Association, which was inaugurated in this meeting amid great public enthusiasm, "showed considerable activity in the early years of its existence. By Resolutions, memorials, and public meetings it focussed the general feeling of the community on all matters of common interest. Unfortunately the public interest gradually waned and the whole show was run by the illustrious triumvirate."[22]

Another important political association was the 'Poona Sarvajanik Sabha.'[23] It was established in 1867 and issued a Quarterly Journal since 1878. Its object, to use its own words, was to represent the wants and wishes of the inhabitants of the Deccan. The members of the Sabha consisted of the "Sardars, Jahgirdars, Immamdars, Sawkars and the gentry, representing the people of Maharashtra." In reply to an Address to the Raja of Kolhapur from which the above is quoted, the Dewan said that the Sabha "has become the recognized political organ of the people of Maharashtra", noted for "assiduous and prompt application to the various important public questions." This is fully borne out by the contents of the Journal. The Dewan also referred to the "useful service rendered by the Sabha to our country, by its indefatigable exertions in representing to the British power, in a spirit of sober independence and profound loyalty, the wants and aspirations of the people." This was hardly an exaggerated account.

The Sabha rendered great services to Maharashtra by awakening the political consciousness of the people. Being alarmed or angered at its activity the Government, in 1897, withdrew its recognition as a public body with the result that the 'Princes', Sardars and other aristocratic members

left the Sabha in a body. It was at first dominated by M. G. Ranade through his disciple G. K. Gokhale who was its secretary from 1891 to 1896. When B. G. Tilak became the dominant figure in 1896 by capturing the Committee of Management, the group led by Ranade started a new political orgnaization known as the Deccan Sabha.

Another important political association of the time was the Mahajan Sabha of Madras founded on May 16, 1884. A fair idea of its views and activities may be formed from the proceedings of the Conference which was summoned by it and met for four days, December 29, 30, 1884, and January 1, 2, 1885. A paper was read recommending the expansion of the Legislative Council to the furthest limit allowed by the Act of 1861, the non-official members being appointed on a representative basis. It was decided to send a memorial on this line to the Government. Another topic discussed was the separation of the judicial from revenue functions.

In addition to the Political Associations mentioned above, there were many other political organizations in different parts of India, which may be regarded as feeder institutions and were mostly of local importance.

C. POLITICAL PROPAGANDA IN ENGLAND

The agitation for the introduction of reforms in Indian administration was not confined to India or to the Indians. From very early times the work in India was supplemented by work in England, both by the Indians and Englishmen. The first Indian to realize the importance of such work was Raja Rammohan Roy. The memorandum which he submitted to the Parliamentary Committee on Indian affairs was the first authentic statement of Indian views placed before the British authorities by an eminent Indian. It is generally agreed that this and other activities of the Raja during his visit to England (A.D. 1830-33) produced some

good effect and influenced the Charter Act of 1833.

Dwaraka Nath Tagore, the grandfather of poet Rabindra Nath, was the next prominent Indian political leader to visit England. The honour and cordiality with which he was received in Britain offers a striking and refreshing contrast to the general attitude of the British towards the Indians in later times. During his first visit to Britain in 1842, he was given a public reception by the notabilities of England, and even Her Majesty Queen Victoria invited him to lunch and dinner. Special importance attaches to a function at Edinburgh where a public address was given to him, in which a hope was expressed that in India "the rod of oppression may be for ever broken and that the yoke of an unwilling subjection may be everywhere exchanged for a voluntary allegiance."[24]

Both Rammohan and Dwaraka Nath felt the need of carrying on propaganda in England on behalf of India, and made permanent arrangements for this work, as mentioned above.[25] This was further facilitated by the fact that throughout the nineteenth century a band of noble-minded Englishmen, inspired by the liberal and democratic views of their country, felt real sympathy for India and exerted themselves on her behalf. Of the many Englishmen of this type special reference should be made to Fawcett, John Bright, and Charles Bradlaugh, who were public men in Engalnd, and Allan Octavian Hume, William Wedderburn, and Henry Cotton who were members of the Indian Civil Service.

Special reference should also be made to the Grand Old Man, Dadabhai Naoroji. He was the most distinguished member of the small band of Indians, who made England their centre of activity for the political advancement of India by awakening the consciousness of the British people to their sense of duty towards India and appealing to their democratic instincts and liberal principles. In order to

carry on this work in a regular and systematic manner Dadabhai, in collaboration with W. C. Bonnerjee, started a society in London in order to enable the Indians and Englishmen to meet together and discuss various matters concerning Indian administration. It was called 'The London Indian Society' and its inaugural meeting was held at the London residence of Jnanendra Mohan Tagore in 1865. Dadabhai was the President of the Society and Bonnerjee, the Secretary. This Society was amalgamated within a year with another Society, known as the "East India Association", which was inaugurated on 1 December, 1866, in collaboration with a Committee of retired English Officials. This Society became very popular and counted among its members, patrons, and sympathizers a large number of Englishmen who had distinguished themselves in various walks of life, as well as retired high officials resident in England who felt sympathy for Indian aspirations. Its meetings were usually well attended and various grievances of India were discussed and remedial measures of various kinds proposed therein. It soon became recognized as an important political association, and branches of it were established in Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras in 1869. By the year 1871 the number of members of the East India Association ran into four figures, and it began to exercise some influence even in the British Parliament. It continued its useful career till 1884 and then gradually sank in importance, due mainly, no doubt, to a change in the attitude of the Englishmen towards India. The shadow of Jingo Imperialism was slowly lengthening over Indo-British relations. The East India Association continued—it continues even today—but it lacked the old sympathy for India and consequently lost its old vigorous activity, beneficial to India.[26]

Another Association, with a view to carry on both social and political work for India in London, was founded in 1867 by Mary Carpenter, the famous biographer of

Raja Rammohan Roy, who visited India four times during the sixties and seventies of the nineteenth century. The "National Indian Association", as it was called, did not, hhwever, acquire much importance.[27]

Reference may be made to a few Indians who distinguished themselves by propagating Indian views during short residences in England. Ananda Mohan Bose, a young student of Cambridge, established "Indian Society" in London in 1872 in order to foster the spirit of nationalism among the Indian residents in Britain. About his speech at Brighton in 1873, Mr. White, M. P., remarked that never in his life had he listened to a more eloquent description of the wrongs of India. Bose's speech was mainly instrumental in carrying a motion in the Cambridge University Union, "that in the opinion of this House England has failed in her duties to India", by 74 votes against 26.[28]

CHAPTER IV

THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

A. THE GENESIS

A new era in the political life of India began with the foundation of the Indian National Congress towards the very end of the year 1885. For more than twenty years after that it completely dominated the political life of India and gave a shape and form to the ideas of administrative and constitutional reforms which formed the chief planks in the political agitation of India.

It is difficult to think of any age or country in which a single political institution has played such a dominant role, for more than sixty years, in the liberation of the motherland from a foreign yoke. It is not, however, historically accurate to say, as many do, that the history of the Freedom Movement in India is nothing but the history of the Indian National Congress ; for, there were other forces and agencies at work, both before and after, to achieve the same end. Nevertheless, the Congress must always form the central theme in any delineation of India's grim struggle for freedom. It is the pivot round which revolves or evolves that story of epic grandeur.

Further, it should be remembered that the Indian National Congress was the result, rather the culmination, of the evolution of those political ideas and organizations which have been described in detail in Chapter III. There was no sudden emergence of this political institution, and there was nothing novel either in its ideas or methods, for the National Conference held in Calcutta in 1883 and 1885 forestalled it in all essential aspects.

It is not, however, an easy task to trace the genesis of the Indian National Congress as a distinct institution. The problem has been stated as follows by Pattabhi Sitaramayya in his *History of the Indian National Congress*, published by the Working Committee of the Congress.

"It is shrouded in mystery as to who originated the idea of an All-India Congress. Apart from the great Durbar of 1877 or the International Exhibition in Calcutta which, as stated above, are supposed to have furnished the model for the great national assemblage, it is also said that the idea was conceived in a private meeting of seventeen men after the Theosophical Convention held at Madras in December, 1884.........Whatever the origin and whoever the originator of the idea, we come to this conclusion, that the idea was in the air, that the need of such an organization was being felt, that Mr. Allan Octavian Hume took the initiative......"[1]

This statement is very misleading. Neither the Delhi *Durbar* of 1877 nor the International Exhibition had anything to do with the Congress. The first suggested the idea of the National Conference[2] —not of the Congress—to Surendra Nath Banerji, and the second offered the suitable date for holding it. There is nothing to support the view that the idea of the Congress was conceived by seventeen members of the Theosophical Convention held at Madras in December, 1884, except a statement of Mrs. Besant which contains glaring errors. Nor is the official historian of the Congress right in his view that "the idea was in the air." It took a definite shape in the two sessions of the National Conference in Calcutta. It is not a little curious that Dr. Sitaramayya did not refer to it even as a possible source of the idea of the Congress. As Surendra Nath very rightly points out, the two 'were conceived on the same lines and had the same programme.'[3] Mr. A. C. Mazumdar, another President of the Congress, stated that the Calcutta National Conference "anticipated the Congress by two years and in

a large measure prepared the ground"[4] for it. There is no doubt whatsoever that to the Indian Association, Calcutta, belongs the credit of first giving a practical shape to the idea of holding an all-India political conference with representatives from every province. As the Congress was started two years later, and its organizers asked for and obtained notes on the first National Conference held in 1883, it may be most reasonably regarded as the genesis of the Indian National Congress.[5]

But whatever may be the genesis, the credit of organizing the Indian National Congress undoubtedly belongs to a large extent to Allan Octavian Hume, a retired member of the Indian Civil Service, and son of the founder of the Radical Party in England. There is no doubt that he was inspired by a genuine syimpathy for the interest and welfare of India, and it by no means detracts from the merit of this noble-minded Englishman that in setting up a political organization like the Congress, he could not possibly be, and was certainly not, inspired by the same national sentiment and patriotic yearning for freedom of India which characterised the advanced political thinkers of Bengal and other parts of India. The reasons which induced him to conceive the idea of a political organization like the Indian National Congress were of an entirely different character. He was deeply impressed by the general discontent in India threatening imminent danger to the Government. "From well-wishers in different parts of the country he received warnings of the danger to the Government, and to the future welfare of India, from the economic sufferings of the masses, and the alienation of the intellectuals.."[6] A memorandum, preserved among the papers of Hume, describes in detail, how, about fifteen months before the end of Lord Lytton's administration, he (Hume) got very definite information about the seething discontent among the masses from some religious devotees, held in

highest veneration by the people. They approached him "because they feared that the ominous unrest throughout the country which pervaded even the lowest strata of the population, would lead to some terrible outbreak, destructive to India's future, unless men like him, who have access to the Government, could do something to remove the general feeling of despair and thus avert a catastrophe."7

The evidence which convinced Hume of "the imminent danger of a terrible outbreak "was contained in seven large volumes which were shown to him. These contained a vast number of communications from over thirty thousand different reporters from the different parts of India. These seemed to indicate that even men of the lowest classes all over the country were determined to do something, and that something meant violence." The possible nature of this violence is thus described in the memorandum:

"Innumerable entries referred to the secretion of old swords, spears and matchlocks, which would be ready when required. It was not supposed that the immediate result in its initial stages would be a revolt against our Government, or a revolt at all in the proper sense of the word. What was predicted was a sudden violent outbreak of sporadic crimes, murders of obnoxious persons, robbery of bankers, looting of bazaars. In the existing state of the lowest half-starving classes, it was considered that the first few crimes would be the signal for hundreds of similar ones, and for a general development of lawlessness, paralyzing the authorities and the respectable classes. It was considered certain also, that everywhere the small bands would begin to coalesce into large ones, like drops of water on a leaf; that all the bad characters in the country would join, and that very soon after the bands obtained formidable proportions, a certain small number of the educated classes, at the time desperately, perhaps unreasonably, bitter against the Government, would join the movement, assume here

and there the lead, give the outbreak cohesion and direct it as a national revolt."[8]

Hume now "became convinced that some definite action was called for to counteract the growing unrest". As soon as he retired from the Government service (1882), he addressed an Open Letter to the Graduates of the Calcutta University on 1 March, 1883. It was a stirring appeal to them to take the initiative in establishing an Association "having for its object to promote the mental, moral, social, and political regeneration of the people of India". There was a good response to this appeal and the "Indian National Union" was formed. Hume intended to begin his reform propaganda on the social side only, and did not desire that politics should form part of their discussion. But the Governor-General, Lord Dufferin, "sent for Mr. Hume and told him that in his opinion Mr. Hume's project would not be of much use. He said there was no body of persons in this country who performed the functions which Her Majesty's Opposition did in England. ....It would be very desirable in their interests as well as the interests of the ruled that Indian politicians should meet yearly and point out to the Government in what respects the administration was defective and how it could be improved, and he added that an assembly such as he proposed should not be presided over by the Local Governor, for in his presence the people might not like to speak out their minds. Mr. Hume was convinced by Lord Dufferin's arguments, and when he placed the two schemes, his own and Lord Dufferin's, before leading politicians in Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and other parts of the country, the latter unanimously accepted Lord Dufferin's scheme and proceeded to give effect to it. Lord Dufferin had made it a condition with Mr. Hume that his name should not be divulged, so long as he remained in the country."[9]

Although the role played by Dufferin, as stated above

is vouched for by Mr. Wedderburn, the biographer of Hume, and Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee, the President of the first session of the Congress, it is difficult to reconcile it with the Open Letter issued by Hume, the alleged fear of a great outbreak of violence as the reason for starting the Congress, and the categorical statement of Dufferin himself that he thought the Congress should direct its attention only to social questions.[10] It is very likely that Dufferin's share in the whole project has been misunderstood. But there is no doubt whatsoever that the Congress was really designed by Hume to arrest the progress of a revolutionary outbreak. Wedderburn clearly states this in his biography of Hume : "The ill-starred measures of reaction, combined with Russian methods of Police repression, brought India under Lord Lytton within measurable distance of a revolutionary outbreak, and it was only in time that Mr. Hume and his Indian advisers were inspired to intervene."[11]

This passage leaves no doubt as to the real motive which inspired Hume to set up the Congress organization with the advice and blessings of the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin. So far as its political objectives were concerned, it was not intended to subserve the object of securing representative Government for India such as inspired the National Conference in Calcutta, nor was it actuated by the more moderate desire of training the Indians in Parliamentary form of Government, as has so often been claimed. It was solely designed to hold back the Indian intelligentsia from joining an apprehended general outbreak against the British. Hume candidly expressed it himself in the following words : "A safety-valve for the escape of great and growing forces, generated by our own action, was urgently needed, and no more efficacious safety-valve than our Congress movement could possibly be devised."[12]

A writer has recently suggested an additional motive for rallying the intelligentsia behind the British authority

in India, namely, the growing menace of Russian advance towards India.[13] There is, however, no evidence to show that Hume and his collaborators were influenced by this consideration.

Thus whereas the National Conference of Calcutta was the culmination of a genuine political movement extending over half a century, the Indian National Congress, which otherwise resembled it, was brought into existence as an instrument to safeguard the British rule in India. To many Indians of the twentieth century it may appear strange that in spite of all this the Indian leaders chose the Congress as their national organization rather than the National Conference. The explanation probably lies in the unequal progress of political ideas in those days in different parts of the country, as was clearly shown by the public reaction to the Ilbert Bill in different provinces of India, as noted above.[14] There were evidently many Indian leaders who could not yet reconcile themselves to the advanced political ideas of the Indian Association of Calcutta. This is indicated by the exclusion of men like Surendra Nath Banerji at the inception of the movement, and the selection, as the first President of the Congress, of W. C. Bonnerjee of Calcutta, who had kept aloof from the Indian Association.

There was probably another consideration which weighed with those who responded to the clarion call of Hume. The Government, they rightly thought, would not look with kindly eyes upon any political organization of the Indians, demanding substantial reforms in the administration. But if the leading part were taken by an Englishman, who once held a high office, the hostility of the official class could be considerably neutralized. The great Indian political leader Gokhale gave expression to this view when he said that "if the founder of the Congress had not been a great Englishman and a distinguished ex-official, such was the distrust of political agitation in those days that

the authorities would have at once found some way or the other of suppressing the movement."[15] This feeling also probably influenced, to a large extent, the organizers of the National Conference in Calcutta to merge it in the Indian National Congress.

In any event there is no doubt that once Hume set the ball rolling, it gathered a momentum beyond expectation. Hume himself generously referred in his public speeches to the help he received from Indian leaders. The Congress movement, he said, was the outcome "of the labours of a body of cultured men mostly born natives of India." It appears that he met and discussed his plans with good many a leader of Bombay such as Badruddin Tyabji, Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta and K. T. Telang. But he did not consult Surendra Nath Banerji. According to B. C. Pal.[16] Hume had a personal dislike for Surendra Nath, partly for his dismissal from Government service and partly for his advanced political views. The Goverment of the day did not like the political advance made in Bengal, and Surendra Nath was definitely in their black list. These considerations might have also dissuaded the other more moderate Indian leaders of those days from associating themselves with the "extremist" Surendra Nath. No other Indian leader had done so much to foster the idea of an all-India political organization such as the Congress was intended to be. Yet he does not seem to have been taken into confidence by Hume along with others named above. There can be hardly any doubt that Surendra Nath was deliberately kept out of this organization at its initial stage. This fact as well as the selection of W. C. Bonnerjee as the President of the first Congress gives a fair idea of the political outlook of the founders of the Congress. Mr. Bonnerjee lived the life of an Englishman and not only kept himself aloof from, but almost ridiculed, all sorts of political agitation. He was not even a member of the

Indian Association, the premier political organization of Bengal.

While all this may explain the attitude of the sponsors of the Congress towards Surendra Nath, it is not easy to explain why the National Conference silently merged itself with the Congress. The political leaders of Bengal could legitimately claim recognition for the former as the national forum for all India, and dispute, on valid grounds, the necessity of starting a new institution. That apprehensions of such a squabble proved baseless reflects the highest credit on Surendra Nath and his colleagues. This self-abnegation or self-sacrifice on their part was inspired by a high sense of partriotism, and it is not unlikely that there were weighty political considerations behind the move. The British decried the political agitation in India as solely inspired by the cowardly Bengalis and claimed that the sturdy military races were all against it."[17] Surendra Nath says in his autobiography : "We (the people of Bengal) counted for nothing in those days. It was constantly dinned into our ears that our political demands, whatever they were, came from the people of the deltaic Ganges, who did not contribute a single soldier to the army, and who were separated from the sturdier races of the North by a wide gulf of isolation, if not of alienation. We wanted to dissipate this myth. To-day it stands exploded by the creation of the Congress..."[18]

The last two cryptic statements in the above quotation perhaps account for the readiness with which the political leaders of Bengal gave up their own organization and joined the Congress. The National Conference was, after all, a creation of Bengal, and in spite of its all-India character, the hostile critics, particularly the British, would represent it merely as as a handiwork of the Bengali agitators. An organization sponsored by a British civilian and Indian leaders, without any special affiliation with any particular Province, was more likely to command great

respect as an independent all-India organization than the National Conference.

This consideration gained additional strength from the fact that the new organization was started under the auspices of an Englishman, and was therefore sure to enjoy the blessings of the small group of public men in England who sympathized with the cause of India. Indian politicians of all shades of opinion had in those days an unbounded faith in the honesty and sense of justice of Englishmen. The Englishmen, they thought, had only to be convinced of the justice of Indian demands, and our salvation would not be long in coming. Besides, a special prestige was attached in those days to an English name. They would therefore naturally welcome the movement which was initiated by an Englishman.

The sympathy and support extended to the Congress by the Viceroy and Governor-General, Lord Dufferin, must have also ensured its success to a considerable degree. Lord Dufferin's share in the conception and planning of the Congress has been referred to above. But he soon discovered that the Congress did not turn out to be as loyal and devoted to the Government as he hoped. Three years after the foundation of the Congress he delivered a speech,[19] whose main object was to denounce the changed programme and activities of the Congress and rally the moderates round the Government against the extremists. In supporting the Congress planned by Hume he merely initiated this policy, steadily pursued by his successors for nearly half a century, and with equal success. It is not difficult to understand why in those days, when Indian nationalism was yet in its infancy, a large section of Indian politicians would readily fall in with his views and acclaim the loyal type of Congress as the national organization. Even the advanced section of politicians, who did not fully share these views, probably found in the Congress a common plat-

form for all shades of political opinion, which, they hoped, would slowly transform it into a really national organization and a less pliable instrument in the hands of Government than Lord Dufferin supposed.

Such transformation was not long in coming. The second session of the Congress held in Calcutta under the guidance and inspiration of Surendra Nath changed the tone of the Congress almost overnight. Lord Dufferin was sadly disillusioned even before he left India. His old sympathy for the Congress was replaced by a hatred and contempt which found expression in his description of the educated middle class represented by the Congress as a "miscroscopic minority," who had no right to speak on behalf of the people.[20]

The transformation of the Congress into something which its official sponsors did not expect, was undoubtedly due in a large measure to the steady development of political thought, sketched above, which had culminated in the National Conference. It also proved the wisdom of those political leaders in Bengal who allowed, without any protest, their own older organization to be merged into the new body. Their spirit of sacrifice did not go in vain. It was amply rewarded by the success of the Congress.

B. THE FIRST TWENTY SESSIONS OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

The Indian National Union, formed by Hume, as mentioned above, decided, in March 1885, to hold a Conference at Poona from 25th to 31st December, and immediately issued a circular letter to this effect. The leading politicians, well acquainted with the English language, from all parts of Bengal, Bombay and Madras Presidencies were invited to attend this conference, whose objects were stated to be "(1) to enable all the most earnest labourers in the

cause of national progress to become personally known to each other ; and (2) to discuss and decide upon the political operations to be undertaken during the ensuing year". It was also stated that subject to the unswerving allegiance to the British sovereign, "the Union would oppose by all constitutional methods all official acts or measures opposed to those principles which were laid down by the British Parliament". Lastly, a hope was expressed that "indirectly this Conference will form the germ of a native Parliament and, if properly conducted, will constitute, in a few years, an unanswerable reply to the assertion that India is still wholly unfit for any form of representative institutions".[21]

On receipt of this circular letter, special committees were formed in a large number of towns in India, whose members, or delegates selected from among themselves, promised to attend the Conference. Hume then proceeded to England and succeeded in enlisting the sympathy and support of a number of liberal Englishmen. He also took steps to ensure wide publicity to the Conference in the British press before he returned to India.

On account of the outbreak of a cholera epidemic in Poona, the venue of the Conference was shifted to Bombay. Its name was changed to the Indian National Congress, and the first session began on December 25,1885. The total number of delegates who attended the session were not less than 72, but they were fairly representative of the different regions of India. According to the official proceedings, "all the leading native political associations and the principal Anglo-native newspapers were represented ; there were members of Legislative Councils, Presidents and members of Municipal Committees and Local Boards." It is to be noted, however, that only a few Muslims attended the session and the delegates from Bengal were very small in number, presumably because the second session of the National Conference was being held at the time in Calcutta.

The meeting was strictly confined to the delegates, the members of the public not being admitted even as spectators.

W. C. Bonnerjee, who was elected President of the Congress, elaborated in his Presidential address the objects of the Congress under the following four heads : 1. The promotion of personal intimacy and friendship amongst the workers in our country's cause in the various parts of the Empire.

2. The eradication by direct intercourse of all posible race, creed or provincial prejudices amongst all lovers of our country and the fuller development and consolidation of those sentiments of national unity that had their origin in their beloved Lord Ripon's memorable reign.

3. The authoritative record, after this had been carefully elicited by the fullest discussion, of the matured opinions of the educated classes in India on some of the more important and pressing of the social questions of the day.

4. The determination of the lines upon which during the next twelve months it is desirable for native politicians to labour in the public interest.

The Congress then discussed and passed nine Resolutions. The more important of these were in the forms of demands to the Government of India for the

1. Appointment of a Royal Commission to enquire into the working of Indian administration.

2. Abolition of the Indian Council (of the Secretary of State).

3. Creation of Legislative Councils in the North-West Provinces, and Avadh, and the Panjab.

4. Admission of elected members in the Legislative Councils with the right of interpellation and discussion of Budgets, and the creation of a Standing Committee in the House of Commons to consider formal protests from majorities in the Councils.

5. Reduction of military expenditure and its equitable apportionment between India and England.

6. Introduction of simultaneous Public Service Examinations in England and India and the raising of the age of candidates.

The speeches were characterized by moderation and extreme effusions of loyalty to the British Crown. A number of Government officials took part in the drafting of the resolutions, and Justice Ranade of Bombay even spoke at the open session of the Congress.

In spite of the moderation and loyalty of the Congress, the English public opinion looked upon the emergence of the Congress as a potential danger to the British power in India. The *Times*, as well as its Bombay correspondent, drew pointed attention to the fact that not a single Muslim member joined the Congress. K. T. Telang, on behalf of the Congress, pointed out that the statement was inaccurate as two leading Mahomedan gentlemen—R. M. Sayani and A. M. Dharamsi did attend the Congress. But this refutation was hardly less damaging than the original accusation.

The main result of the first session of the Congress was that it quickened the political consciousness of the people. The Resolutions passed by it were widely circulated and discussed by the local political associations. The newspapers also heartily welcomed the new organization as the most powerful organ of Indian political opinion and put forward various suggestions for the consideration of the next Congress. The result of all this was clearly perceived in the second session of the Congress which met in Calcutta with Dadabhai Naoroji as President. The number of delegates attending the session was about 440, more than six times that of the first session. The eminent political leader Surendra Nath took an active part in this session and henceforth proved to be one of the strongest pillars of the Congress organization, like Dadabhai and

Pherozeshah Mehta. The conservative British Indian Association of Calcutta joined the Congress, but the National Muhammadan Association of Bengal held aloof.

The second session of the Congress marked a distinct advance over the first. The men who attended the first Congress at Bombay had no representative character—they were only volunteers. The second Congress was composed of delegates, elected at public meetings held for the purpose in different Provinces. "Five hundred delegates were elected, of whom 434 actually registered their names and credentials as present." This procedure has continued ever since and the method of electing delegates has been clearly formulated from time to time. Another innovation was the admission of the public as spectators of the proceedings. A third novel feature was also introduced. "Various circulars were issued suggesting subjects for discussion and outlining proposals, so that delegates might not come unprepared—a plan that, unfortunately, fell into desuetude."[22]

A distinct change in tone and spirit of the Congress was noticeable during its session in Calcutta, and this was undoubtedly due to the greater advance in political life in Bengal during the preceding half a century, as noted above.

Henceforth the idea gradually gained ground that the Congress was the handiwork of the Bengalis, although, as mentioned above, noted Bengali leaders had nothing to do with the conception of the Congress, and very few of them attended its first session at Bombay. This view is expressed by Malleson, the noted historian of the Mutiny. Writing less than five years after the Bombay session of the Congress Malleson says that it was "started by the noisy Bengalis."[23] How far the Indian National Congress was impregnated with the advanced political thought of Bengal after the second session may be gathered from a speech delivered by Syed Ahmad, on the eve of the third session to be held at Madras, in order to dissuade the Muslims from attending

it. "If you accept", said he, "that the country should groan under the yoke of Bengali rule and its people lick the Bengali shoes, then, in the name of God ! jump into the train, sit down, and be off to Madras, be off to Madras."[24] Even the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, in his letter, dated 4 January, 1887, to the Secretary of State, Lord Cross, referred to the Congress as a 'Bengalee Constitution.,'[25]

The third session, held at Madras, was presided over by an eminent Muslim leader Badruddin Tyabji, who later became a judge of the Bombay High Court. The number of delegates rose to 607, and the need was felt of drawing up a regular constitution of the Congress. But though a Committee of 34 members was set up for this purpose, no regular constitution was adopted during the next twenty years. The difficulty caused by the absence of such constitution was brought to a head by the strong opposition made by a young group of delegates to the current practice of leaving to a few senior delegates the task of preparing drafts of Resolutions to be moved at the public session. The opposition was violent in character and ultimately it was decided to set up at the opening of each session of the Congress a small representative committee in order to fix up the programme and prepare the draft of the Resolutions to be placed before the plenary session of the Congress.[26] This was the genesis of the "Subjects Committee" which henceforth became a regular feature of the Congress, and made the first breach in the strong citadel of orthodox and conservative leadership of the Congress.

The Indian National Congress passed a number of Resolutions each year demanding reform in administration and redress of grievances, but neither the Government of India nor the British Cabinet paid any heed to them. Hume was pained and shocked by the stolid indifference displayed by the Government, the open hostility of the

officials, and the antagonism of the Muslims who represented the Congress movement as an attempt to establish the Hindu Raj.

"The educated men, the Press, and the Congress", said Hume, "have endeavoured to instruct the Government, but the Government, like all autocratic Governments, has refused to be instructed, and it will now be for us to instruct the nations, the great English nation in the island home, and the far greater nation of this vast continent, so that every Indian that breathes upon the sacred soil of this our motherland may become our comrade and coadjutor, our supporter, and if needs be our soldier, in the great war that we, like Cobden and his noble band, will wage for justice, for our liberties and rights."[27]

In pursuance of such a propaganda Mr. Hume, according to his biographer, set to work "with his wonted energy, appealing for funds to all classes of Indian community, distributing tracts, leaflets, and pamphlets, sending out lecturers and calling meetings both in large towns and in country districts." Throughout the country over thousand meetings were held, many of which were attended by more than five thousand persons. Of the numerous pamphlets attention may be drawn to two which were widely distributed and created considerable stir at the time. These were entitled "A Congress catechism" and "A Conversation between Maulvi Furreduddin and one Ram Buksh of Kambakhatpur". They vividly depicted the evils of landlordism and the despotic Government and pointed out that the only remedy of these evils was the representative Government for which the Congress was fighting. These pamphlets contained bitter attacks against Government and were not as harmless as some have represented them to be.[28]

The mass movement irritated the officials all the more, and they not only desired to suppress the Congress but also recommended that Mr. Hume should be deported.

Even Sir Auckland Colvin, who had hitherto been "distinctly friendly to the Congress movement, was very much perturbed". This gave rise to the historic correspondence between Colvin and Hume in October, 1888. Colvin regarded the mass movement inaugurated by Hume as "premature and mischievous", but Hume considered it necessary for the State ; and neither could convince the other.[29]

But Colvin received support from a class of Indian leaders. One of them, B. C. Pal, thought that "it would be a dangerous thing not only for the British Government but also for India, if the masses were to be imbued with antagonism to British rule through political agitations". As an excuse or justification for this attitude, Mr. Pal pointed out that the Brahma Samaj, of which he was a member, owed its safety, if not its very existence, to the principle of complete religious freedom inculcated by the British in India, and was "frankly afraid of a return to Hindu or Moslem rule in India."[30] Such a confession from a man of Pal's eminence shows the hurdles Indian nationnalism had yet to cross, and gives us a measure of the great progress it made during the next two decades. Incidentally it may be noted how Mr. Pal's attitude, shared by many leaders, though for different reasons, also explains why Hume's mass movement failed.

The official opposition was specially noticeable when the Congress held its fourth session at Allahabad, the capital city of Colvin. It was found difficult to procure a site for the meeting of the Congress on account of the obstacles put by both civil and military authorities. Sir Syed Ahmad, aided by a loyal Hindu Zamindar, set up a rival organization, and the officials not only helped it but held out the threat that anybody joining the Congress would come to grief. But, in spite of, or perhaps due to, this official attitude, over 1200 Delegates, including 200 Muslims, attended the Allahabad session of the Congress.

The fifth session which met at Bombay in December, 1889, was attended by exactly 1889 delegates (a curious coincidence) and presided over by Sir William Weddderburn, the friend and biographer of Hume. This session was rendered memorable by the presence of Charles Bradlaugh, M. P., whose genuine pro-Indian attitude in the House of Commons earned him the sobriquet, "Member for India". He told the delegates that they constituted a living refutation of the charge often heard within the walls of Parliament that there is no Indian people ; there are only two hundred millions of diverse races and diverse creeds."

A scheme of representative government was drafted in this session, but it raised the ugly head of communalism. A demand was made by a Muslim delegate that there should be an equal number of Hindu and Muslim members in the Council.[31] It did not get much support, and even the majority of Muslim members voted against it. But it was a bad omen for the future.

The Congress also resolved to send a deputation to England to place before the British public its views about political reforms in India which were then being considered by the British Government.

During the sixth session, held in Calcutta, the Government publicly declared the Indian National Congress to be "perfectly legitimate", and permitted the Government servants to attend the Congress session but not take part in its deliberations.

The passing of the Indian Councils Act of 1892 heartened the Congress. Though it was very disappointing and the reforms conceded fell far short of the Congress demands, still the Act was hailed as the first victory of the constitutional agitation inaugurated by the Congress.

Henceforth the Congress did never falter in its onward march from year to year, buoyed up with courage and hope for ultimate success. Though there was no essential

change either in its ideal and outlook, or in its method of agitation, it came to be gradually recognized both by friends and foes, in India and in Britain, to be a potent force in the public life of India.

It is not necessary to trace the sessions of the Congress year after year, or to give an account of the various Resolutions passed by it. A general account of the more important reforms demanded by it during the first twenty years must suffice.

The demand for the abolition of the India Council, passed in the first session, was reiterated, and a proposal was made to replace it by a Standing Committee of the House of Commons to advise the Secretary of State.

The most persistent demand of the Congress was to increase the share and responsibility of the Indians in the administration of the country. In the very first session it demanded the establishment of Legislative Councils in the two newly created Provinces, viz., N. W. P and Avadh, and the Panjab. It also demanded that all Budgets should be referred to the Councils, that the members be granted the right of interpellation, and that a Standing Committee of the House of Commons should be constituted to receive and consider any formal protests that may be recorded by majorities of such Councils against the exercise by the Executive of the power, which would be vested in it, of overruling the decisions of such majorities.

The second session of the Congress (1886) proposed an elaborate scheme for reforming the Council, with 50 p. c. elected members, but conceding indirect election by various districts.

The Congress made persistent demand for expanding both the Supreme and Provincial Legislative Councils and increasing the popular element in them by election of non-official members. When the Act of Council Reform was passed in 1892, the Congress regretted "that it did not,

in terms, concede to the people the right of electing their own representatives to the Council", and expressed the hope "that the rules now being prepared under the Act, will be framed on the lines of Mr. Gladstone's declaration in the House of Commons". In the next two sessions, in 1893 and 1894, the Congress passed Resolutions, pointing out that 'material alterations are necessary alike in the rules of the Government of India and in the practice of most of the Local Governments if real effect is to be given to the spirit of the Act'.

In 1904, the Congress went one step further and demanded representation of Indians in the British House of Commons, each Province or Presidency of India returning at least two members. It also asked for "the appointment of Indian representatives (who shall be nominated by the elected members of the Legislative Councils) as members of the India Council in London and of the Executive Councils of the Government of India and the Governments of Bombay and Madras"

It is hardly necessary to add that year after year the Congress passed Resolutions, protesting against the abuses, and urging for reforms, in the various branches of administration. The Resolution for the separation of the Executive and Judicial functions was passed no less than ten times between 1886 and 1906. Trial by Jury, reform of the Police administration, reduction of salt tax and income-tax, extension of the Permanent Settlement, etc., formed the subjects of Resolutions passed in many sessions. In 1898 the Congress expressed "its deep sense of disapproval of the reactionary policy of Government with regard to the Local Self-Government, recently inaugurated by the introduction of the Calcutta Municipal Bill into the Bengal Legislative Council, the creation of the Bombay City Improvement Trust without adequate popular representation, and its action in other directions." The general attitude of the Congress

towards the British administrative system may be gathered from the following Resolution adopted in 1891 :

"That this Congress, concurring in the views set forth in previous Congresses, affirms—that fully fifty millions of the population, a number yearly increasing, are dragging out a miserable existence on the verge of starvation, and that, in every decade, several millions actually perish by starvation. That this unhappy condition is largely due to

(a) The exclusion of the people of India from a due participation in the administration and all control over the finances of their own country.

(b) The extravagant cost of the present administration, military and civil, but specially the former ; and to

(c) A short-sighted system of Land Revenue Administration, whereby not only is all improvement in the agriculture of the country, on which nine-tenths of the population depend for subsistence, rendered impossible, but the gradual deterioration of that agriculture assured.

"That hence it has become imperatively necessary—

That the cost of the administration be greatly reduced in the military branch, by a substantial reduction of the Standing Army, by the substitution of long-termed local European troops like those of the Hon. E. I. Company for the present short-term Imperial Regiments with their heavy cost of recruitment in England, in transport and of the excessive mortality amongst non-acclimatized youths ; by the cessation of the gigantic waste of money that has gone on now for several years, on so-called Frontier Defences, and by a strict economy in the Commissariat, Ordnance and Store Departments ; and in the Civil Branch by the wide substitution of a cheaper indigenous agency for the extremely costly imported Staff ; and that measures be at once taken to give, as was promised by the British Government thirty years ago, fixity and permanence to the Land Revenue demand and thus permit capital

and labour to combine to develop the agriculture of the country, which, under the existing system of Temporary Settlements in recent times often lasting for short periods, in some cases only extending to 10 and 12 years, is found to be impossible; and to establish agricultural banks."

The above Resolution has been quoted at length as it indicates that the Indian National Congress fully represented the popular feelings about the condition of the masses, and that it did not merely indulge in destructive criticism but also made constructive suggesttions to remove the greatest evils of the British administration.

As a corollary to the above Resolution the Congress was insistent in its demands for holding simultaneous examinations in London and India for admission to the Civil Service and raising the maximum age of competitors. The Congress placed on record its deep regret at the Resolution of the Government of India on the Report of the Public Service Commission (appointed in 1886), and pointed out in detail how the Government Resolution had substantially reduced the number of higher appointments which were recommended by the Commission to be held by the Indians. It was also resolved to send a petition to the House of Commons on the subject drawing its attention to the grave discontent caused by the Report of the Commission as well as the action of the Government.

The Indian National Congress guarded the interests of India like a vigilant watch-dog, and never failed to record its emphatic protest against any measure likely to affect them adversely. Thus in 1894 in the Madras session it protested against the "injustice and impolicy of imposing excise duty on cottons manufactured in British India, as such excise is calculated to cripple seriously the infant mill industry in this country", and put on record its firm conviction that "in proposing this excise the interests

of India have been sacrificed to those of Lancashire". Similar protests were recorded against many other Government measures which, in the opinion of the Congress, would inflict unnecessary and unjustified hardship on the people or would injure their true interests.

C. THE RELATION BETWEEN THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS AND THE BRITISH INDIAN ASSOCIATION

It would be interesting to study the relations between the Indian National Congress and the political associations already existing in India, which continued to carry on their useful activities after the foundation of the Congress. Copious data are available for such a study so far as the British Indian Association of Calcutta is concerned. The early history and activities of this body, founded as far back as 1851, have been described above[32]. It sent delegates to the Congress for the first three years (1885-87), but then difference arose over the exact nature and function of the Indian National Congress.

"......In reply to a letter from the Standing Committee of the Congress (Calcutta), seeking the views of the British Indian Association on the tentative rules drawn up for the Congress, the Secretary of the British Indian Association stated (6th December 1888) that while the Association had co-operated with the Congress for the past three years and would do so in future, it definitely objected to the tentative rules, which aimed at changing the character of the Congress and making it a separate and permanent organisation. The British Indian Association considered the Congress as only a national conference, representing the different political bodies in the country, but not being a permanent and independent entity. The letter maintained that the objects of the Congress did not differ materially from those of the existing political associations, namely to petition the authorities on redress of grievances. But it

would lose its representative character if it turned itself into a separate independent body, since the existing political associations would not like to function as mere Sub-Committees of the Congress. The letter concluded: "The Committee are clearly of opinion that the Congress should simply be a conference of the representatives of the nation and nothing more, and with that view it should dissolve itself as soon as its sitting was over, leaving to the different political Associations of the Country to carry out the objects of the conference in the way which was most agreeable to them. In this way unification of public opinion will be secured while independence of the actions of the different Associations will be recognised and respected".

As the Congress refused to accept this point of view the British Indian Association *practically* held aloof from it, for it instructed its delegates not to take part in the discussion of any subject-matter other than those relating to the expansion of the legislative Council and the extension of the Permanent Settlement. The delegates were also forbidden to represent any other institution at the Congress,

The rift between the two political organizations, though unfortunate, was inevitable. "It was not because the Association represented the rich and the Congress the poor, or because the Association's policy was timid while that of the Congress was bold. In the early days of the Congress there was not much of a difference between the two bodies in respect of either composition or policy. The rift was inevitable because of the natural pride of a political organization of 40 years' standing, refusing to be swallowed up by an organization just born."

It should be noted that the British Indian Association did not altogether lose its prestige and importance as a political organization down to the end of the nineteenth century. When Gandhi came to Calcutta he approached

it to help the Indian settlers in South Africa. The British Indian Association fully supported the views of Gandhi and sent a strong representation on the subject to the Government of India on 5 February, 1897.[33]

D. THE BRITISH ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

It is hardly necessary to add that the British Government and the British people, both at home and in India, with a few honourable exceptions, regarded the Congress as the greatest enemy of British rule in India, and its demands as almost outrageous. The *Times*, commenting on the Resolutions adopted in the first session of the Congress, observed that if they were carried out, very little would remain to England except the liability for the entire Indian debt. The *Times* reminded the Congress that "*India was won by force and must be governed by force*, and if the British were to withdraw, it would be in favour not of the most fluent tongue or of the most ready pen, but the strongest arm and the sharpest sword."[34] This represents the real spirit of John Bull towards the Congress in spite of sympathy, both genuine and pretended, expressed by a few Englishmen.

The Anglo-Indian press described the gathering as a revolutionary league. Even Lord Dufferin, who initiated the idea of the Congress, in his speech at St. Andrews Day Dinner on 30 November, 1888, ridiculed the idea of introducing democratic methods of Government in India and the adoption of Parliamentary system demanded by the Congress. It was, in his opinion, a very big jump into the unknown, and the British Government would never allow the Congress, which represented a microscopic minority of the population of India, to control her administration.[35] It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that Dufferin's attitude became the fixed policy of the British

Government. Thus Lord George Hamilton, the Secretary of State for India, wrote to the Viceroy, Lord Elgin, on 11 December, 1896 : "It is gratifying to note that the Congress, as a political power, has steadily gone down during the last few years, and this is, I think, largely due to the indifference and unconcern with which the Indian Government has tolerated its proceedings." On 24 June, 1897, Hamilton again wrote to Elgin : "The more I see and hear of the National Congress Party the more I am impressed with the seditious and double-sided character of the prime-movers of the organization"

Curiously enough, though Hamilton spoke of the decline in the power of the Congress, he was very anxious to curb its influence. On 1st May, 1899, he wrote to Lord Curzon suggesting three means to counteract Congress activities. These are :

1. To ascertain who, amongst princes and noblemen, subscribed to the Congress fund and to let them know that the Government are aware of the fact.

2. To prefer for honours and distinctions those who are not Congressmen.

3. To exercise a greater control over education, its organization and text-books.

How Lord Curzon followed his chief's instructions may be easily gathered from his activities. There can be hardly any doubt that the Universities Act of 1904 was inspired by the item No. 3. As to item No. 1, he wrote to Hamilton on 7 June, 1899 : "I gather that you want me to ascertain what native princes or noblemen contribute to Congress funds and I will endeavour to discover this." But Curzon hardly required any inspiration. On November 18,1900, he wrote to Hamilton : "My own belief is that the Congress is tottering to its fall, and one of my greatest ambitions while in India is to assist it to a peaceful demise".

In general, the Government adopted the policy of

favouring the anti-Congress elements and putting pressure upon the rich and the aristocracy, who were amenable to Government Control, to withdraw their patronage from the Congress. This was done with remarkable success, and few would have dared openly support the Congress, and thereby provoke the wrath of the British Government. Unfortunately, this unholy conspiracy between the British and Indian authorities against the Congress could not achieve its object, owing to one miscalculation. They did not know that the Indian National Congress derived its strength and support from the middle class and not from the wealthy and the aristocracy.

But Hamilton had other weapons in his armoury to destroy the influence of the Congress. In his letter to Lord Curzon, dated August 9, 1899, he writes :

"I think the real danger to our rule in India, not now but 50 years hence, is the gradual adoption and extension of Western ideas of agitation and organisation, and, if we could break the educated Hindu party into two sections holding widely different views, we should, by such a division, strengthen our position against the subtle and continuous attack which the spread of education must make upon our present system of Government."

This is a clear enunciation of the policy of "rally the Moderates" which was followed with conspicuous success in the twentieth century, specially by Morley and Montague, to which reference will be made later.

It is hardly necessary to add that the British, both at home and in India, were very glad that important communities had not joined the Congress. Lord Cross wrote to Lord Reay, Governor of Bombay, on 13 January, 1890." "It is, however, very satisfactory to find that the Mahomedans and the Parsees have as a body separated from the Congress."[36]

The leaders of the Indian Congress, however, did not lose faith in the British people. Hume, disgusted at

the conduct of the British officials in India, held that "our only hope lies in awakening the British public to a sense of the wrongs" done to the Indian people. Inspired by this idea Hume pressed upon Congress workers the vital need for carrying on a full-fledged political propaganda in Britain. "The least that we could do," said he, "would be to provide ample funds for sending and keeping constantly in England deputations of our ablest speakers to plead their country's cause—to enable our British Committee to keep up an unbroken series of public meetings, whereat the true state of affairs in India might be expounded—to flood Great Britain with pamphlets, leaflets, newspapers, and magazine articles—in a word to carry on agitation there on the lines and scale of that in virtue of which the Anti-Corn-Law League triumphed."

In accordance with this scheme, a paid Agency was established in 1888 under Mr. W. Digby with a regular office, and a vigorous campaign was carried on in Great Britain. Ten thousand copies of the Report of the third Congress, and many thousand copies of speeches and pamphlets were printed and circulated, while Messrs. Bradlaugh, W. C. Bonnerjee and Eardley Norton delivered many lectures on Indian affairs in various parts of England. A permanent committee, under the title (finally adopted) of "The British Committee of the Indian National Congress", was started in July, 1889, with Sir W. Wedderburn as Chairman, Mr. Digby as Secretary, and a number of distinguished Englishmen and two Indians (Mr. Bonnerjee and Dadabhai Naoroji) as members. The Indian National Congress of 1889 confirmed its constitution and voted Rs. 45,000 for its maintenance,—the amount to be raised by a proportional contribution from each of the Provincial Congress Committees.

The Committee decided to wage war against the hostile official propaganda, particularly of the India Office,

on three fronts ; in Parliament, by organizing an Indian Parliamentary Committee; on the platform, by arranging public meetings throughout the country ; and in the Press, by founding the journal, "India", as an organ of Congress views.

The Indian Parliamentary Committee gained great strength in 1893 when it comprised 154 members of the House of Commons. Their activities led to the appointment of the 'Welby Royal Commission on Indian expenditure and the apportionment of charge between India and the United Kingdom.'

A number of public meetings and lectures were addressed not only by liberal Englishmen but also eminent Indians like Surendra Nath Banerji and G. K. Gokhale. Gokhale made a very good impression by his political speeches at Manchester and other places. He spoke at a meeting of the Undergraduates' Union at Cambridge where his motion in favour of more popular institutions for India was carried by 161 to 62 votes. In addition to public meetings and lectures, the interest in India was kept alive through addresses to associations and other select audiences, social entertainments, and interviews with ministers, members of Parliament, editors, and other public men.

The main function of the Journal, "India", was to supply reliable information to the British public about the actual state of affairs in India, in order to counteract the influence of the London Press whose articles on Indian subjects were "mainly supplied by Anglo-Indians, and unfavourable to Indian aspirations". "India" supplied true record of "current facts, events and opinions" in India and thus supplied 'arms and materials' to those who were willing to fight for the cause of India. Its circulation was not very large, but it was recognized as "the chief purveyor of Indian news to a large part of the Liberal Press".

CHAPTER V.

THE NATIONALIST MOVEMENT IN POLITICS

A. RISE OF THE NATIONALIST PARTY

Although the Indian National Congress failed to secure from an unsympathetic Government any substantial grant of political reforms which it demanded for twenty years (1885-1905), it helped the political advancement of India in various ways. The annual sessions of the Congress, bringing together the leading representative men from remote parts of India, gave a reality to the ideal of Indian unity, developed patriotic feelings among all classes of the diverse races and creeds of India, and awakened political consciousness among a steadily increasing circle of educated Indians. Besides, as the more important political, economic and administrative problems of India were regularly discussed in the meetings of the Congress, and later also in the Provincial Conferences, and these discussions often reached a very high level, the Indian National Congress became instrumental in widely diffusing very useful and accurate knowledge necessary for the political development, and educating public opinion on all questions concerning the welfare and progress of India.

The same object was further achieved by the part played by some of the Congress leaders in the enlarged Legislative Councils set up by the Act of 1892. A large number of very distinguished political leaders were elected members of these Councils, and for the first time Indian point of view on every public question was most ably pleaded by them. The eloquent speeches of Pherozeshah Mehta and Surendra Nath Banerji, voicing the aims and

aspirations of political India which were hitherto heard only in the Congress pandal or on public platform, were now echoed in the Council chamber in the presence of the highest officials of the Government. Men like Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Asutosh Mukherjee and Ramakrishna Bhandarkar brought to bear upon the burning questions of the day such a mature knowledge and wealth of details that no Government could easily brush them aside. They achieved little success by way of practical results, but their activities as well as the career of Dadabhai Naoroji who placed the Indian question before the British public, and before the House of Commons when he was elected its member in 1892, roused the political consciousness of India, to an extent unknown before.

Apart from this notable contribution to the political training of the Indian people, the Indian National Congress enhanced the political prestige of India and quickened the sense of national pride in the heart of the Indians, in an indirect way, through the personality, character, patriotism, and high intellectual eminence of the great galaxy of eminent leaders who nurtured this infant institution and brought it safely to an adolescent stage. Men like Dadabhai Naoroji, Surendra Nath Banerji, Pherozeshah Mehta, R. C. Dutt, Lal Mohan Ghose, G. K. Gokahle, B. G. Tilak and Pandit Madan Mohan Malavya,—to mention only a few—made a deep impression not only upon all classes and shades of opinion in India, but even upon Englishmen, as visible embodiments of the intellectual and cultural progress that India had made in the nineteenth century. Their lives and attainments were living testimony to the fitness of the Indians for advanced political life, and they raised the Indians in the estimate of our foreign rulers such as nothing else could possibly have done.

It would be unjust, therefore, to minimise the importance of the Indian National Congress or the value of its

work, even though its actual attainments fell far short of its aims and aspirations. It would, however, be equally wrong to look upon the Congress as the only channel through which flowed the political currents of India and to regard it as either the sole medium of the evolution of national life or the only agency which carried on the campaign for political regeneration of India during the first twenty years of its existence.

Broadly speaking, the practical measures of reform demanded by the Indian National Congress between 1885 and 1905 represent more or less the stage of political progress reached in Bengal during the preceding half or quarter of a century. The shortcomings of the British rule and the measures suggested for their removal covered nearly the same ground. The means to achieve the ends were also the same. One marks the same unflinching faith in the providential character of the British rule, the robust and sincere sentiments of devoted loyalty to the British crown, and the same pathetic, almost abject, belief in the sense of justice of the British who would concede all the reasonable demands of the Indians as soon as they were properly approached. The Indian National Congress, however, could not keep pace with the advanced political ideals, and failed to respond to the developed sense of nationality and patriotism, which grew in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. An abstract love of liberty for its own sake and as our birth-right, a passionate desire for freedom based upon a sense of greatness of our ancient culture, an innate hatred of British rule on account of its iniquitous character, and a spirited protest against the arrogance of the English—all these which deeply stirred the neo-nationalists of the period, are conspicuous by their absence in the programme and proceedings of the Indian National Congress during the first twenty years of its existence. No wonder, therefore, that the ideals and methods of the

Congress failed to satisfy the advanced political thinkers of the time and the votaries of new spirit of nationalism who were gradually becoming a political force in the country.

There were mutterings of protests by Bankim Chandra Chatterji as far back as 1883 against the policy of mendicancy followed by our political leaders and later adopted by the Congress. Arabinda Ghose, destined to attain immortal fame at a later date, published a series of diatribes against the Congress in the year 1893 in the *Indu Prakash* of Bombay. The general tone of the criticism may be judged by the following passage :

"………I say, of the Congress, then, this ;—that its aims are mistaken, that the spirit in which it proceeds towards their accomplishment is not a spirit of sincerity and whole-heartedness, and that the methods it has chosen are not the right methods, and the leaders in whom it trusts, not the right sort of men to be leaders ;—in brief, that we are at present the blind led, if not by the blind, at any rate by the one-eyed.

"………In an era when democracy and similar big words slide so glibly from our tongues, a body like the Congress, which represents not the mass of the population, but a single and very limited class, could not honestly be called national………"[1]

Elsewhere, Arabinda comments :

"The Congress in Bengal is dying of consumption : annually its proportions sink into greater insignificance; its leaders, the Bonnerjis and Banerjis and Lalmohan Ghoses, have climbed into the rarefied atmosphere of the Legislative Council and lost all hold on the imagination of the young men. The desire for a nobler and more inspiring patriotism is growing more intense."[2]

The Congress was severely criticized in Bengal by popular newspapers liks the *Bangabasi*, mainly on account of its policy of mendicancy, lack of contact with the

masses, and the practical limitation of its activity to the three days of the annual session. In the Congress session of 1897 Aswini Kumar Datta, a distinguished delegate from Bengal, strongly denounced it as a "three days' *tamasha*" (merriment).

An edge was lent to the criticism against the Congress by the obvious fact that it did not respond to the famous manifesto issued by Allan Octavian Hume to the Graduates of the Calcutta University in March, 1883, which is generally believed to have led to its inauguration two years later. Attention may be drawn to a few passages of this manifesto: 1. Whether in the individual or the nation, all vital progress must spring from within.

2. They who would be free themselves must strike the blow.

3. Whether in the case of individuals or nations, self-sacrifice and unselfishness are the only unfailing guides to freedom and happiness.

These are noble sentiments, but found no echo in the hearts of the leaders of the Congress if they are judged by their speeches and activities during the first twenty years. Instead of putting faith in the maxim that all vital progress must spring from within, the Congress looked to the British Government for all improvements. Mr. Hume, in his manifesto, appealed to the educated Indians to "make a resolute struggle to secure greater freedom for yourselves and your country," and observed that if "fifty men cannot be found with sufficient power of self-sacrifice, sufficient love for and pride in their country, sufficient genuine and unselfish heartfelt patriotism to take the initiative, and if needs be, devote the rest of their lives to the cause, then there is no hope for India." It would be hardly an exaggeration to say that the Congress would have looked upon this programme almost with a horror and would not touch it with a pair of thongs.

The new nationalists felt whole-hearted sympathy with the ideals preached by Hume but ignored so far by the Congress. Their criticism against the Congress has been ably summed up by Lajpat Rai, himself a distinguished nationalist leader. Their main point of attack was that the Congress lacked the essentials of a national movement. "The Congress movement", observed Lajpat Rai, "was neither inspired by the people, nor devised or planned by them. It was a movement not from within". The Congress leaders had "neither sufficient political consciousness nor faith. They had certain political opinions, but not beliefs for which they were willing to suffer. Nor were they prepared to bear persecution for the cause they undertook. Either they did not know that they had a cause, or they were wanting in that earnestness which makes men suffer for a cause."[3]

Whether these comments and criticisms were fully justified or not, they unerringly indicate the new political outlook of the nationalist school as distinguished from those who had hitherto led the activities of the Congress. But the most serious charge against the Congress was that its leaders were not in touch with the people; they felt shy of the masses, made no effort to reach them, and systematically discouraged younger men from doing the same".[4] There is no doubt that this charge was fully justified.

It is thus apparent that although the organization envisaged by Hume might have developed into a true national movement, the leaders of the Indian National Congress proved unequal to the task. Their activities in and outside the Congress and the Legislative Councils, however useful and praiseworthy in other ways, did not advance the cause of the national movement whose origin and nature have been described above.

This, however, did not in any way, deflect the national movement from its course, nor retarded its further develop-

ment. As a matter of fact the Indian National Congress lost the leadership of the national movement shortly after its inauguration, and did not recapture it until Mahatma Gandhi came to preside over its destiny. During this long interval the real national movement ran its course outside the Congress pandal and the legislative chambers. The same factors which gave birth to it and sustained it so far, were not only still at work, but some of them grew more and more intense with the progress of time and cast their influence over a larger and larger sphere in India.

The faint beginnings of this type of nationalism may be traced in the speeches of Rajnarain Bose, who played a significant role in the birth of nationalism in Bengal, as mentioned above.[5] In 1888 he made a stirring appeal to his countrymen. After describing the economic ruin and cultural degradation brought about by the British rule in India, he wrote : "Will you not remedy this fearful state of things by self-help, persistent constitutional agitation and other lawful means ? Will you for ever lie in the slough of despondence ?... . ...Are you so dull-headed as to think that our foreign conquerors are a set of philanthropists who have come to our country to serve your interests only and not their own ? Do you think they will neglect their own Birmingham and Manchester, and encourage your arts and manufactures as you wish ? Members of a down-trodden race ! Know ye not that he who would rise, must himself make the attempt ."[6]

But it was the grandson (daughter's son) of Rajnarain Bose, Arabinda Ghose of revered memory, who was the high-priest of the new cult of nationalism. His philosophical interpretation of nationalism may be gathered from the following passage in one of his articles :

"It is not in human nature to rest eternally contented with a state of subordination or serfdom. God made man in His own image, essentially and potentially free and pure;

shall man keep him in eternal bondage and sin ? Freedom is constitutional in man, and when this freedom is curtailed by social and civil laws and institutions, it is done not to kill but to perfect this very freedom itself. This is the only rational end and justification of those necessary limitations that society imposes upon human freedom everywhere, and where this justification is absent, human nature revolts against these limitations, whether social, religious, or political, creating conflicts, struggles, revolutions, through which humanity realises its divinely appointed destiny everywhere. The desire for autonomy is constitutional in man and not a mere functional disturbance such as the tyrant and the aggressor has always proclaimed it to be. Is it sinful to cherish that which is a necessary element in the very constitution of man's mind and soul ? Has not history preserved, as the most sacred relics of the race, the achievements of this natural and God-inspired impulse from its very birth ? Has not art beautified it in a thousand lovely forms, in poetry, in painting, in music, and in sculpture ? Has not religion, wherever and whenever it has been able to free itself from the selfish control of priests and princes, sanctified this noble instinct, as the very breath of God ? Shall we alone deem it a sin and be branded, for cherishing this divine desire, as criminals ?

"Tyrants have tried but have they ever succeeded in repressing this natural love of freedom in man ? Repressed, it has grown in strength ; crushed under the heel of the tyrant, it has assumed a myriad forms and in successive incarnations gaining strength and inspiration from repeated failures and endless suffering, it has risen finally, to overthrow its oppressor for good : this is the teaching of History, this is the message of Humanity.

"But like the scriptural adder, tyrannies have eyes but they see not, have ears but they hear not, and the uuiversal teaching of history and the eternal message of

humanity are both lost on them. And the car of progress has, through human folly and perversity, to wade through blood and ruin still on earth."[7]

This is the rationale for 'Indian autonomy,' according to the new school.

The credit of leavening Indian politics with this national spirit undoubtedly belongs to Bal Gangadhar Tilak, a Chitpavan Brahman of Poona. He was the first among the Indian political leaders to emphasize, both by precept and example, the four distinctive features which characterized the new movement. The first is a sincere faith in the glory and greatness of Indian culture in the past and the belief that all future development must be based upon this stable foundation. The second is a heartfelt conviction that the policy of mendicancy followed by the Congress would not lead to the desired goal and that the Indians must rely on their own strength and assert their inalienable rights even at the risk of great surferings and sacrifices before they can hope to achieve any substantial measure of self-government. The third is the clear enunciation that the political goal of India is self-government or *Swaraj*, rather than reforms in administration to which the Congress devoted its whole energy and attention during the early years of its existence. The fourth is the awakening of political consciousness among the people at large and the consequent need of political agitation among the masses.

Tilak struck a new note in Indian politics when a terrible famine broke out in Bombay in 1896. His emissaries orally explained to the people the relevant sections of the Famine Relief Code and distributed leaflets or pamphlets containing abstracts of its important sections. Having thus educated the people in the knowledge of their rights, Tilak asked the people to take their stand on their rights and boldly demand the benefits offered by the Famine Relief Code. He asked them not to be cowards and not to pay

the Government dues by selling their lands and cattle. Through his paper, the *Kesari*, he made stirring appeals to the people. "When the Queen desires that none should die, when the Governor declares that all should live, will you", he passionately exclaimed, 'kill yourself by timidity and starvation? If you have money to pay Government dues, pay them by all means. But if you have not, will you sell your things away only to avoid the supposed wrath of subordinate Government officers? Can you not be bold, even when in the grip of death?"[8] Week after week Tilak continued in this strain, denouncing in forceful language the lack of manliness among the "sheepish people", and urging upon them lessons of self-reliance. "He deplored and condemned food riots". "Why loot the bazars", he used to say, "go to the Collector and tell him to give you work and food. That is his duty." It is this activity of Tilak which the official circles regarded as no-rent campaign and has been described by them as such ever since. Tilak's name was entered into the "Black List" of the Government as Enemy Number One. The official circles never forgot or forgave him, and he was looked upon as one of those tall poppies which must be cut off to make India safe for British Bureaucracy.

Far more important is the inauguration of the Ganapati and Shivaji festivals by Tilak which may be said to be an important landmark in the history of the new movement. Tilak's object undoubtedly was to utilize the religious instincts and historical traditions for the purpose of engendering patriotism and national spirit among the people. He also hoped that these festivals, organized on a popular basis, would bring together the masses and the classes, a much desired contact the importance of which the Congress never realized.

The Ganapati festival was an old religious institution Maharashtra, but Tilak transformed it into a national

festival and gave it a political character by organizing lectures, processions, *melas* and singing parties. These were calculated to inculcate in the people a sturdy manhood, organized discipline and love of their country. Besides, it offered a common platform to the masses and classes and helped considerably in fostering national sentiment and promoting political education among large sections of people who kept aloof from organizations of a distinctive political character such as the Congress or Conferences. The festival, as reorganized by Tilak in 1893, appealed instinctively to all classes of people and spread rapidly all over Maharashtra.

Two classes of people were, however, seriously opposed to it. The liberal Hindus of the school of Ranade sneered at the old orthodox beliefs and practices underlying the ceremony, and the orthodox Congress politicians condemned it as an aggressive challenge against Muslims. Tilak defended his position in several articles in the *Kesari*. He emphasized the "wisdom of the policy of carrying forward, *mutatis mutandis*, those institutions which had been honoured by time and saved from the eternal silence." He also quoted analogies from the history of Greece and Rome. "The great unifying and rousing effect of the Olympian and Pythian festivals and also of the Circus was emphasised with convincing force."

"Tilak laid stress on the duties of the educated people in that respect. He suggested to the intellectual classes to discontinue some of the older objectionable festivals and substitute others more useful. He maintained that it was their duty to change the course of those festivals and give them the complexion of instruments for preparing the mind of the people for some kind of national work. Such festivals, he said, provided ample opportunities for the tutored classes to come into close contact with the untutored, to enter into their very spirit, to

understand their needs and grievances, and lastly, to make them cosharers in the benefits of education and all other new notions of patriotism which education usually carried with it. Tilak gave a bit of his mind to the social reformers who never lost an opportunity to abuse and misrepresent him. With bitter sarcasm he casually observed that, Ranade mixing with the people in the Ganesh festival and lecturing to them in front of that God of learning, or participating freely in the anniversary celebrations of a saint like Ramdas, and expatiating before hundreds of people that gathered there on the national work of that mighty and heroic sage, would be inconceivably more useful to the nation than Ranade sitting in the prayer-hall of the social reformers with his eyes and lips closed in devoted contemplation of their idea of the Almighty."[9]

Tilak met the objections of the politicians by stating that "there is nothing wrong in providing a platform for all the Hindus of all high and low classes to stand together and discharge a joint national duty." On this occasion, as in later days, Tilak was charged with having a communal outlook, and was even accused of malice and hatred against the Muslims. But all this is belied, among others, by his magnanimous gesture at the Lakhnau Congress to which reference will be made later. Incidentally, reference may be made in this connection to another charge levelled against Tilak, namely, that he started an organization known as the Anti-cow-killing Society, which was intended to be, and actually served as, a direct provocation to the Muslims. This allegation was repeated in Valentine Chirol's book, *Indian Unrest*, and formed one of the counts in the libel case instituted by Tilak against him. Chirol requested the Government of India to supply him evidence in justification of this and other accusations he had made against Tilak, for they were based on official records. The Government

of India appointed Mr. Montgomery, I. C. S., as a special officer for this purpose. After sifting all the available records Montgomery was forced to come to the conclusion that "Tilak had nothing to do with the inception of an anti-cow-killing movement, nor is there any evidence to show that either before or after the Hindu-Muslim riots of 1893 he took any part in the management of the Anti-cow-killing Society, or in furthering its aims"[10] It is worth mentioning in this connection that even the Ali brothers acknowledged Tilak as their political *guru*.

The origin of the Shivaji festival is to be traced to the dilapidated condition of the grave of Shivaji at Raigarh, which was his capital. In an issue of the *Kesari* in April, 1895, Tilak referred to it and made an appeal for money to repair the monument out of gratitude to Shivaji, the liberator of Maharashtra and protector of Hinduism. This object was not achieved during the lifetime of Tilak, but there were two interesting side-issues of highly important character. The first was a movement, mainly through Tilak's efforts, to celebrate an annual festival in honour of Shivaji's birth at Raigarh. In spite of official opposition the first celebration was successfully held on March 15, 1895, at Raigarh and lasted for two or three days amid the greatest enthusiasm of the people. Indeed the festival took such a great hold over the public mind that it was held at many other places besides Raigarh.[11]

These celebrations led to another important development, namely a revision of the historical estimate of Shivaji. The idea gradually gained ground that "Shivaji ought to be judged by the standard of morality applicable to a great public benefactor ; he had on his shoulders the responsibility of establishing Swaraj for the Marathas, and whatever he did, with the purpose of accomplishing his end, was done for national good and must, therefore, be voted to be appropriate."

The Shivaji festival was "national hero-worship" and "round his name rallied all the newly aroused national pride and enthusiasm of the Maharashtrian people." As regards the new conceptions of Shivaji which the Shivaji festivals held out before the people, the following description would give a fair idea. "Fiery speeches were made and Tilak himself said that a higher morality than that of the Indian Penal Code, in the usual ethical teachings of the East and the West, governs the life of nations; and Shivaji was fully justified in killing Afzal Khan, because it was a great unselfish act for national self-preservation. 'God has not conferred on the Mlechchha a grant of Hindustan inscribed on imperishable brass.' Another speaker said: 'Who dares to call that man a murderer who, when only nine years old, had received Divine inspiration not to bow down before a Mahommedan Emperor? Who dares to condemn Shivaji for disregarding a minor duty in the performance of a major one? Had Shivaji committed five or fifty crimes more terrible, I would have been equally ready to prostrate myself not once but one hundred times before the image of our lord Shivaji. ......Every Hindu, every Mahratta must rejoice at this spectacle, for we too are all striving to regain our lost independence, and it is only by combination that we can throw off the yoke."[12]

This point of view found eloquent expression during the celebration of the Shivaji festival at Poona on June 12, 1897. Learned discourses were given on Shivaji, depicting him as a valiant fighter for his religion and motherland. In one of the meetings, over which Tilak presided, Professor Bhanu defended Shivaji against the charge of murdering Afzal Khan. Professor Jinsivale also supported him by citing the similar doings of other historical empire-builders like Napoleon and Caesar. In his closing speech Tilak wound up the proceedings by "distilling out before the audience the inner patriotic motive of that deed and made

a feeling appeal to the public to assemble at least for a day during the 365 of the whole year to pay their tribute to the memory of that great nation-builder." A detailed report of the proceedings of this meeting was published in the *Kesari* with some editorial comments. A poem was also published in its columns in which the following verses, among others, were put in the mouth of Shivaji :

"I delivered my country by establishing 'Swaraj' and saving religion. I planted in the soil of Maharashtra virtues that may be likened to the Kalpavriksha (one of the five trees of Indra's Paradise that yields whatsoever may be desired), sublime policy based on strong foundations, valour in the battlefield like that of Karna, patriotism, genuine unselfishness, and unity, the best of all. Alas, alas, all I see now is the ruin of my country. Those forts of mine to build which I poured out money, to acquire which torrents of fiery blood streamed forth, from which I sallied forth to victory roaring like a lion—all those are crumbling away. What a desolation is this ! Foreigners are dragging out Lakshmi (the goddess of Good Fortune) by the hands of persecution. Along with her, plenty has fled, and with plenty, health.

"Say, where are those splendid ones who promptly shed their blood on the spot where my perspiration fell ? People eat bread once in a day, and not even enough of that. They toil through hard times by tightening up their bellies. ...The cow...is taken daily to the slaughter house and ruthlessly butchered by the unbelievers......How can I bear this heart-rending spectacle ? Have all our leaders become like helpless figures on the chess-board ? What misfortune has overtaken the land ?"[13]

There is no doubt that the Shivaji festival took on a decidedly political character. The discourses on Shivaji were definitely intended to rouse patriotic feelings and awaken national consciousness among the people. But it

was not confined to such discourses alone. Among its regular features were included, among other things, big-public processions in which bands of volunteers showed their skill in fencing, music parties sang religious and patriotic songs, and stories and poems were recited to inculcate national sentiments. Some of these were definitely revolutionary in character as will be shown later.

Within ten days of the Shivaji festival held at Poona, Mr. Rand, the Collector of Poona, and another officer, Lieut. Ayerst, were shot dead while returning from the Government House at night. The murder was committed by the Chapekar brothers in order to avenge the atrocities perpetrated by the Britsh soldiers employed in enforcing preventive measures against the plague epidemic in the city of Poona. But Tilak was held indirectly responsible for the crime by the Anglo-Indian circles, and the Anglo-Indian Press demanded his prosecution. The Government yielded, and Tilak was arrested on a charge of sedition. The charge mainly rested on the speech of Tilak at the Shivaji festival, and in particular to that part of it in which he defended the murder of Afzal Khan by Shivaji. Tilak was sentenced to 18 months' rigorous imprisonment.

People rightly held that Tilak was really persecuted for his sturdy spirit of independence, strong national sentiments, and fearless criticism of unjust measures of Government, paticularly their anti-plague policy and repression practised by Mr. Rand and his myrmidons. The proud disdain with which Tilak refused to offer an apology to Government after his conviction was a marked contrast to the conduct of Gokhale who tendered an abject apology to the Government for statements he had made in England with respect to the violent acts of soldiers during the plague epidemic. Much might be said in justification of Gokhale, but his abject surrender to the Government without any proper inquiry into the allegations completely whitewashed

the vile and heinous doings of the British soldiers, whereas Tilak really suffered for his courageous protest against their conduct.

This difference between Gokhale and Tilak, as well as the Congress session of 1897 (held at Amraoti) throws a lurid light on the growing cleavage between old school of politics and the new spirit of nationalism. Although public sympathy for Tilak was being continuously expressed all over India, the proposal to pass a special resolution about him in the Amraoti Congress was thwarted by the influence of the Moderate party. Eloquent tributes, were, however, paid to Tilak by Sankaran Nair, the President of the Congress, Surendra Nath Banerji, and others. "When Babu Surendra Nath Banerjee reached the peak of his superb oratory while speaking of Tilak, people in the Congress rose to their feet in reverence, triumphantly cried out, echoed and re-echoed the name of Tilak, and clapped their hands with such a tremendous enthusiasm that even the stentorian voice of that renowned Demosthenes of India was very nearly drowned. Newspapers of the day described that magnificent scene in the Congress as unprecedented in its history".

The trial and conviction of Tilak may be regarded as a landmark in the history of Indian nationalism. Henceforth sacrifice and sufferings in the cause of the country, rather than eloquence and debating skill, came to be regarded as the badge of honour and distinction. The martyrs replaced mere orators as acknowledged champions of liberty; the homage of the nation was no longer paid to intellectual brilliance in politics, but was reserved for the sturdy spirit that bravely challenged the autocracy without any fear. Though the charges against Tilak were substantiated by writings and speeches in connection with the Shivaji festival, the festival itself survived his incarceration. Tilak rightly thought that round the personality of Shivaji, he could gather all the patriotic and national

forces. "The inspiration which western democratic teaching gave to us was rather weak and essentially outlandish. But the worship of Shivaji was such as even the ignorant villager could understand. The name of Shivaji was a symbol of unity, courage, sacrifice. It connoted the highest patriotic fervour. It stood for complete political emancipation. Shivaji and *Swaraj* were synonymous words. By starting the Shivaji festival in 1895, Mr. Tilak stimulated the National instincts of the people. He gave a message to the people freed from the puzzling verbiage of western democracy and which being simple and direct went straight to their hearts."[14]

Tilak typified the new nationalist spirit which was gathering force and was destined ere long to sweep the whole country. He fully deserves the high tribute paid to him in the following passage :

Like Socrates, Tilak brought "political philosophy in India from heaven to earth, from the Council Hall or the Congress *mandap* to the street and the market. Politics so far was comparatively a feeble affair,—it lacked life. It is the great merit of Tilak that he put a new self-confidence, a new self-assertiveness into his people......... It was reserved for Tilak to make both the Government and professional politicians look for a new power, viz. the people. It was one of the standing arguments of the official party that the Congress did not represent the people. Tilak cleverly turned the tables on the Government by boldly identifying himself with the masses. Tilak's attempt to democratise the political movement and bring it home vividly into the consciousness of the average man, infused a new life and vigour into the movement and gave it a very different character."[15]

"To bring in the mass of the people, to found the greatness of the future on the greatness of the past, to infuse Indian politics with Indian religious fervour, are the indispensable

conditions for a great and powerful awakening in India. Others—witers, thinkers, spiritual leaders—had seen this truth ; Tilak was the first to bring it into the actual field of practical politics".[16]

It has been truly remarked that "Tilak has contributed more by his life and character than by his speeches or writings to the making of the new nationalism."[17] His 'selfless patriotism, indomitable courage and fierce determination, and above all the supreme concentration, without reservation, of his life to the one great aim, viz. the freedom of his country,'[18] may be said to mark a new epoch in the political struggle for India's freedom.

Tilak's efforts were ably seconded by Bipin Chandra Pal, Arabinda Ghose, Lala Lajpat Rai, Khaparde and others. They raised the standard of revolt against the mendicant policy of the Congress, and preached the cult of self-help in different parts of India through books, journals and lectures. The writings and speeches of these men breathed a new spirit of boldness and self-confidence. They instilled a reverence for the past and confidence for the future, and asserted the inalienable right of the Indians to shape their own destiny without caring for the frowns or smiles of the alien rulers.

Arabinda Ghose was 'the most typical representative of the new type of nationalism, in its most intense metaphysical and religious form. Nationalism with him was not a political or economic cry ; it was the innermost hunger of his whole soul for the re-birth in him, and through men like him in the whole of India, of the ancient culture of Hindusthan in its pristine purity and nobility.'[19]

Arabinda expounded the essence of his philosophy of nationalism in a lecture at the Bombay National Institution on 19th January, 1908. The following extracts from it will convey a fair idea of the high pedestal of spirituality on which he placed he new nationalism.

"There is a creed in India today which calls itself Nationalism, a creed which has come to you from Bengal...... What is Nationalism? Nationalism is not a mere political programme. Nationalism is a religion that has come from God; Nationalism is a creed which you shall have to live. Let no man dare to call himself a Nationalist if he does so merely with a sort of intellectual pride, thinking that he is something higher than those who do not call themselves by that name. If you are going to be a Nationalist, if you are going to assent to this religion of Nationalism, you must do it in the religious spirit. You must remember that you are the instruments of God. What is this that has happened in Bengal?......But certain forces which are against that religion are trying to crush its rising strength. It always happens when a new religion is preached, when God is going to be born in the people, that such forces rise with all their weapons in their hands to crush the religion. In Bengal, too, a new religion, a religion divine and *sattwik* has been preached, and this religion they are trying with all the weapons at their command to crush...... Will you do as they do in Bengal? (Cries of 'yes'). Don't lightly say 'yes'.......If anybody had told you that Bengal would come forward as the saviour of India, how many of you would have believed it?......The work of salvation, the work of raising India was begun. Consider the men who are really leading the present movement.......If you ask what material weapons we have got, I must tell you that material weapons may help you no doubt, but if you rely wholly upon material weapons then what they say is perfectly true that Nationalism is a madness.......If you do not rely upon something mightier than material strength, then you will have to depend solely upon what others can give.......What you cannot expect from God you are going to expect from the British Government? Your expectation is vain.......When I went to Bengal three or

four years before the *Swadeshi* movement was born, to see what was the hope of revival, what was the political condition of the people and whether there was the possibility of a real movement, what I found there was that the prevailing mood was apathy and despair.......The whole nation lifted itself out of delusions and out of despair, and it was by this sudden rising, by this sudden awakening from dream that Bengal found the way of salvation and declared to all India that eternal life, immortality and not lasting degradation, was her fate.......But there was one truth that I have always tried, and those who have worked with me have also tried, to lay down as the foundation stone of all that we preached. It was not by any mere political programme, not by National Education alone, not by *Swadeshs* alone, not by Boycott alone, that this country can be saved...... They do not always realise who guides or where he will guide them ; but they have this conviction, within, not in the intellect but in the heart, that the Power that is guiding them is invincible, that it is almighty, that it is immortal and irresistible and that it will do its work. They have nothing to do. They have simply to obey that Power......It is a religion by which we are trying to realise God in the nation, in our fellow-countrymen. We are trying to realise Him in the three hundred millions of our people....The hour of my consecration has come, and I have to thank God now that the time for laying myself on His altar has arrived and that I have been chosen to suffer for the good of my countrymen.......But when you have a higher idea, when you have realised that you have nothing, that you are nothing and that the three hundred millions of people of this country are God in the Nation, something which cannot be measured by so much land or by so much money, or by so many lives, you will then realise that it is something immortal, that the idea for which you are working is something immortal and that it is an immortal Power

which is working in you. All other attachments are nothing. Every other consideration disappears from your mind, and as I said, there is no need to cultivate courage. You are led on by that Power. You are protected through life and death by One who survives in the very hour of death, you feel your immortality in the hour of death, you feel your immortality in the hour of your worst sufferings, you feel you are invincible......You may be sure that if you embrace this religion of Nationalism you will have to meet such tremendous forces as no mere material power can resist. The hour of trial is not distant, the hour of trial is already upon you......Try to realise the strength within you, try to bring it forward, so that every thing you do may be not your own doing, but the doing of that Truth within you......and the whole nation will rise, the whole people of this great country will rise, filled with a divine power, filled with the inspiration of the Almightly, and no power on earth shall resist it, no danger or difficulty shall stop it in its onward course."[20]

The same idea was again expressed by him in another lecture in the following words :

"It is because God has chosen to manifest Himself and has entered into the hearts of His people that we are rising again as a nation.......It will move forward irresistibly until God's will in it is fulfilled. He fulfils His purpose inevitably and these too He will fulfil....... When they pass away others will arise or even if no great men stand forth to lead, still the soul of this people will be great with the force of God within and do the work.......*Swaraj* is not the Colonial form of Government nor any form of Government. It means the fulfilment of our national life. That is what we seek, that is why God has sent us into the world to fulfil Him by fulfilling ourselves in our individual life, in the family, in the community, in the nation, in the humanity....... '[21]

Bipin Chandra Pal preached in a popular form the philosophy of Vivekananda and Arabinda Ghose. Lajpat Rai, Khaparde and others were, like Tilak, hard-grained practical politicians who strove to leaven politics with this new element. The combined effort of these leaders and their followers ushered in an altogether new movement in Indian politics which developed distinct features of its own, fundamentally differing from the Congress School of the day. Some of these basic differences are noted below. For the sake of convenience the two schools may be referred to as the Congress and the Nationalist School, without any further implication.

The Congress School sincerely believed that India was not yet in a position to stand on her own legs and for many years needed British rule to make her fit for self-government. This mentality was clearly reflected in the Presidential address in the Congress of 1897, the very year in which Tilak was imprisoned for sedition. Here is an extract from the speech of Sankaran Nair who presided: "We are also aware that with the decline of British supremacy, we shall have anarchy, war and rapine. The Mahomedans will try to recover their lost supremacy. The Hindu races and chiefs will fight amongst themselves. The lower castes who have come under the vivifying influence of Western civilisation are scarcely likely to yield without a struggle to the domination of the higher castes."

The Nationalists were not deterred by these considerations and advocated liberty from foreign control on abstract principles. The whole position was summed up by Tilak in one sentence which has become classic: "Swaraj is my birth-right and I must have it." Arabinda Ghose was an uncompromising champion of the same policy. "Can the wealth of the whole world", passionately exclaimed Lajpat Rai, "be put in the scales over against liberty and honour?" "A subject people", he continued, "has no soul, just as

a slave can have none.........A man without a soul is a mere animal. A nation without a soul is only a herd of "dumb driven cattle".[22]

It was urged by the Congress leaders that the Indians are not yet fit for carrying on their own administration and a period of political apprenticeship was necessary for this purpose. It was also freely argued that freedom is a cry for the moon so long as social abuses, religious superstitions, communal rivalry, and illiteracy of the people are not removed, and the Indians have sufficient military knowledge to defend their country.

The Nationalists denied the logic behind these arguments and held that if India had to wait for the removal of these defects she will have to wait till doomsday. They further argued that a foreign rule is more likely to perpetuate those evils than remove them.

Regarding the question of fitness B. C. Pal explained the nationalist point of view. "The new spirit", said he, "accepts no other teacher in the art of self-government except self-government itself. It values freedom for its own sake, and desires autonomy, immediate and unconditioned, regardless of any considerations of fitness and unfitness of the people for it ; because it does not believe serfdom in any shape or form to be a school for real freedom in any country and under any conditions whatsoever. It holds that the struggle for freedom itself is the highest tutor of freedom which, if it can once possess the mind of a people, shapes itself the life, the character, and the social and civic institutions of the people, to its own proper ends.

"The time has come when in the interests of truth and the civic advancement and freedom of the people, our British friends should be distinctly told that while we are thankful to them for all the kind things they have said all these years for us, and the ready sacrifices they have made to make our lot easy and their yoke light, we cannot

any longer suffer to be guided by them in our efforts for political progress and emancipation. Their view-point is not ours. They desire to make the Government of India popular, without ceasing in any sense to be essentially British ; we desire to make it autonomous, absolutely free of the absolute control".[23]

The Congress school believed that the British rule in India was a divine dispensation and piously hoped that under their guidance India would one day attain self-government. The Nationalists did not believe that a foreign ruler could ever have benevolent intentions towards the subject people, and pointed out that in all essential matters the British interests were bound to be in conflict with the true interests of the Indians. Far from believing in the providential character of the British rule the Nationalists represented the British conquest of India as achieved by fraud and chicanery, inspired by greed, and maintained for purely selfish interests.

Unlike the Congress School the Nationalists did not pin their faith on the benevolence of Viceroys or the sense of justice of the British people or any British party. The change in the outlook is expressed in the following passage :

"Our eyes have been turned away from the Government : away from the Houses of Parliament : from Simla and Calcutta ; and our faces have turned now to the starving, the naked, the patient, and long-suffering 300 millions of Indian people, and in it we see a new potency, because we view them now with an eye of love which we had never felt before, and in the teeming, toiling, starving and naked populations of India, we find possibilities, potentialities, germs that have given rise to the movement, namely, Faith in the people, Faith in the genius of the nation, Faith in God, Who has been guiding the genius of this nation through ages by historical evolu-

tion, Faith in the eternal destiny of the Indian people. With the decadence of our faith in the foreign Government and in the foreign nation, has grown up this higher, this dearer, this deeper, this more vital and more divine faith in Indian Humanity."[24]

B. MILITANT NATIONALISM.

1. The Genesis.

History records numerous instances where a nation or a group of people within it, smarting under the tyranny of a foreign or despotic rule but unable to resist it openly, takes to secret organization to bring about its fall. Love of the suffering motherland and impotent rage at the inability to relieve her distress gradually lead to the growth of secret societies as the only possible means to achieve the end. The moral justification of the methods pursued and the extent to which real success is or can possibly be achieved by them, are matters of dispute and need not be reverted to here. But underground or terrorist organizations are well-known phenomena in the process of the historical evolution of States, and have often played a role, by no means insignificant, in the struggle for freedom by subject people. Modern Europe is replete with instances of such activities, particularly in the history of Italy, Ireland and Russia.

As will be shown later, Bengal was a breeding ground of terrorism on an extensive scale. This may be attributed principally to the teachings of Bankim Chandra and Vivekananda, though none of them deliberately intended it or even visualised its possibility. It must be noted, however, that long before them revolutionary ideas were instilled into the minds of the young Bengali students by Surendra Nath Banerji's lectures on Mazzini and the Italian freedom movement,[25] and the articles on the same subjects in the monthly Bengali Journal *Aryadarshan*, edited by Yogendra

Nath VIdyabhusan, from 1874. But it was Bankim Chandra who prepared the solid ground for it by his highly romantic picture of the inmates of *Anandamath* (Abbey of Bliss). They were a band of patriots who had left their hearth and home, and devoted themselves to the service of their motherland suffering from tyranny and misrule. Under the thinly veiled disguise of Muslim rulers—for he dared not openly refer to the British—he has drawn with marvellous skill and pathos the picture of a secret militant organization against the Government.

Reference has been made above[26] to the conception of patriotism portrayed in the *Anandamath*, published in 1882.

To convey an idea of the profound effect produced on young minds by this famous novel, it will suffice to refer to the conversation between Bhavananda, an inmate of *Anandamath*, and Mahendra Sinha, a *Zamindar*, now reduced to poverty, who had lost his wife and child in a tragic manner and given them up for dead. We should, of course, substitute 'English' for the 'Muslims' wherever it occurs,—as was really intended by the author, and certainly understood by his readers :

"In that smiling moonlit night the two silently walked across the plain". Bhavananda "made many an attempt to open a conversation with his companion but Mahendra would not speak. Having no option left, he then began to sing to himself.

Mother, I bow to thee !
Rich with thy hurrying streams,
Bright with thy orchard gleams,
Cool with thy winds of delight,
Dark fields waving, Mother of might,
Mother free."

"It is the country and no mortal mother," cried Mahendra. "We own no other mother," retorted Bhavananda ;

"they say, 'the mother and the land of birth are higher than heaven'. We think the land of birth to be no other than our mother herself. We have no mother, no father, no brother, no wife, no child, no hearth or home ; we have only got the mother—

Rich with hurrying streams,
Bright with orchard gleams."

Mahendra now understood the song and asked Bhavananda to sing again. He sang (the whole Bande Mataram song of which the opening lines are quoted above).

Mahendra saw that the outlaw was weeping as he sang. He then asked in wonder, "Who may you be, please ?"

Bhavananda answered, "We are the Children."

"Children ! Whose children are you ?"

"Our mother's."

"Well, but does a child worship its mother with the proceeds of robbery ?'

"We do nothing of the sort."

"Presently you looted a cart."

"Was that robbery ? Whom did we rob ?"

"Why, of course the king !"

"The king ! What right has he to take this money ?"

"It is the royal portion which goes to the king".

"How do you call him a king who does not rule his kingdom ?"

"I fear you will be blown up before the sepoy's cannons one of these days".

"We have seen plenty of sepoys ; even today we have had some".

"You haven't yet known them aright, you will know them one day however."

"What then ? One never dies more than once"

"But why would you willingly invite death ?"

"Mahendra Sinha, I thought you to be a man amongst men, but I now see there is little to choose between you

and the rest of your lot—you are only the sworn consumer of milk and butter. Just think of the snake. It creeps on the ground ; I cannot think of any creature lower and meaner than it ; but put your foot on its neck and it will spread its fangs to bite you. But can nothing disturb your equanimity ? Look round and see, look at Magadha, Mithila, Kasi, Kanchi, Delhi, Kashmir—where do you find such misery as here ? Where else do the people eat grass for want of better food ? Where do they eat thorns and white-ant's earth and wild creepers ? Where do men think of eating dogs and jackals and even carcasses ? Where else can you find men getting so anxious about the money in their coffers, the *Salgram* (family idol) in their temples, the females in the Zenana, and the child in the mother's womb ? Yes, here they even rip open the womb ! In every country the bond that binds a sovereign to his subjects is the protection that he gives ; but our Mussulman king—how does he protect us ? Our religion is gone ; so is our caste, our honour and the sacredness of our family even ! Our lives even are now to be sacrificed. Unless we drive these tipsy longbeards away, a Hindu can no longer hope to save his religion",

"Well, but how can you drive them away ?"

"We will beat them."

"Alone, will you ? With a slap, I presume."

The outlaw sang :

"Who hath said thou art weak in thy lands,
When the swords flash out in twice seventy million hands
And seventy million voices roar
Thy dreadful name from shore to shore ?"27

M: "But I see you are alone".

Bh: "Why, only now you saw two hundred of us".

M: "Are they all children ?"

Bh. "They are, all of them."

"How many more are there ?"

"Thousands of them; we will have more by and by".

"Suppose you get ten or twenty thousands. Could you hope to depose the Mussulman king with them ?"

"How many soldiers had the English at Plassey ?"

"Tut ! to compare the English with the Bengali".

"Why not ? Physical strength does not count for much ; the bullet won't be running faster, I ween, if I am stronger."

"Have you these qualities ?"

"No, but you don't pluck them like ripe fruits from trees ; they come by practice."

"What is your practice ?"

"Don't you see we are all anchorites ? Our renunciation is for the sake of this practice alone. When our mission is done or the practice is completed, we shall go back to our homes. We too have wives and children."

"You have left them all ? How could you break the ties of family life ?"

"A Child must not lie ! I will not brag in vain to you. Nobody can ever cut the bond. He who says that he never cares for the family bonds either did never love or merely brags. We don't get rid of the bonds but simply keep our pledge. Will you enter our order ?"

* * * * *

"He who takes this vow," said Bhavananda, "has to give up his wife and children. If you take it, you need not see your wife and daughter. They will be well kept, but till the mission is fulfilled, you are not to see their face (s)."[28]

The *Anandamath*—from which the above extracts are quoted—reacted strongly on the minds of Bengali youths, fired with patriotism and newly awakened national sentiments, and imbued with the spiritual teachings of Vivekananda who asked them to shed fear, gather strength and energy, serve the cause of the country, and make supreme

sacrifice for it—no matter whether it involves suffering or even destruction of the body. The *Bhagavad Gita*, frequently quoted by Vivekananda and made popular by the Bengali translation with elaborate commentary by Bankim Chandra, taught them to look upon this body as a mere transient thing—a tattered garment to be put off by the soul for a new one,—and to perform one's duty in a detached spirit, without looking for its result or reward, laying down life or killing others, if need be, with equanimity—for every man is merely the agent of God and doing His work.

It would appear from what has been said above, that new nationalism and its militant aspect were coeval. Rajnarain Bose, who was the first exponent of nationalism in Bengal, also organized the earliest secret society whose "members had to take the oath that they would destroy by the use of force the enemies of the country and deliver India from her bondage."[28a] Bankim Chandra, the author of the *Anandamath*, which inspired and stimulated militant nationalism more than anything else, was out and out a nationalist in the ordinary sense of the term. The same was the case with Arabinda Ghose. As will be related later, militant nationalism was sustained and encouraged by the precepts and examples of such men as Surendra Nath Banerji, Swami Vivekananda, B. G. Tilak and Rabindranath Tagore, though none of them perhaps directly lent support to it. It has been said of some of these and many other leaders that they had occasionally lent their moral support to the cult of militant nationalism, but it is difficult either to prove or to disprove it.

In any case one thing may be regarded as certain. Militant nationalism, or the so-called terrorism, was not born of the fanciful thought of a few hot-headed or misguided youths, solely inspired by hatred of the English. It was a part and parcel of the new nationalism that

swept the country, though following a different path which was trodden by revolutionaries in many a State in Europe. It enlisted the services of a number of educated young men of the middle class who dedicated their lives for the cause of the motherland and were prepared to undergo extreme suffering and sacrifices. Like nationalism, it was a movement *by* the middle class but not *for* the middle class alone. It had in view the supreme interest of India as a whole to be achieved through complete freedom. It is interesting to note that Bankim Chandra, Vivekananda, Arabinda, Tilak and Rabindra Nath, who directly or indirectly inspired militant nationalism, were all, like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the pioneer of the political movement in India, sincerely devoted to the interests of the masses. Bankim Chandra's essays are replete with passionate appeals for the improvement of the lot of cultivators, and equity (*samya*) in social treatment of the people. Tilak, Rabindra Nath and Vivekananda put the interests of the masses, irrespective of caste or creed, in the forefront of their programme. The gravamen of Arabinda's charge against the Congress was that it did not represent the mass of the population. The devotees of militant nationalism followed this high ideal, and to them their goal—the freedom of India—was merely means to the great end of the emancipation of the masses from political, economic, and social thraldom.

It is a singular fact, not often realized, that some of those whom the militant nationalists regarded as their *Guru* or pioneer—Raj Narain Boşe, Bankim Chandra, Vivekananda and Arabinda—were men who occupied a very high place in the world of religion and learning. A movement started under their guidance, and with their blessings, or inspired by their teachings, must be given its due importance, and we must try to appreciate it and assess its real value. The question of its success or failure, which will be discussed later, should not influence our judgment about its nature,

objectives and ideals, or its contribution to India's struggle for freedom from the British yoke.

2. The Beginnings

Secret societies of amateurish type existed in Calcutta during the seventh decade of the 19th century. In addition to those formed in imitation of the Carbonari of Italy, mentioned above,[29] we hear of another started by Rajnarain Bose which initiated young Rabindra Nath and his elder brother into the vow of achieving India's freedom.[30] Mr. B. C. Pal has also given some account of one, every member of which had to sign the pledge of membership with his own blood drawn at the point of a sword from his breast.[31] There are stray references to the formation of similar societies in Patna. These societies had no practical result to show by way of organizing revolution or political association. The credit for organizing the first secret revolutionary society in the post-Mutiny period, with the avowed object of overthrowing British rule in India, belongs to Wasudeo Balwant Phadke.[32]

Phadke was born in 1845 in a Chitpavan Brahman family of Shirdhor in the Kolaba District, Bombay. He had no good education, but had enough knowledge of English to get a small job on Rs. 60 a month.

From his early boyhood he developed a strong dislike for the British who had deprived the Chitpavan Brahmans (to which clan the Peshwas belonged) of their high position in Maharashtra. This feeling was changed to hatred by an incident in his office. He was informed of the serious illness of his mother and applied for leave. But due to red-tapism his leave was not sanctioned till it was too late. When he reached home his mother had expired.

Phadke was deeply stirred by the devastating famine in Bombay Province in 1876-7 and was firmly convinced that the miseries of India were due to the British rule.

He was confirmed in his belief by a lecture delivered by Ranade who explained in a lucid manner the shocking exploitation of Indian wealth by the British. Although he attended the lecture nearly five years before, it was rankling in his heart and he found a concrete illustration of it in the Bombay famine of 1876-7. After a great deal of cogitation and agitation Phadke took a vow to stir up an armed rebellion and destroy the power of the British in India. For this purpose he used to collect bands of young men, explained to them virtues of patriotism, and gave them training in the use of arms. His ideas were not favourably received by the educated class, and so he turned for support to the lower or backward communities. Chief among these were the Ramosis who used to serve in the inferior ranks of the police in the Maratha administration and had risen in revolt against the British in 1826. They were a turbulent class and carried on depredations during the British rule for three years before they could be finally subdued. Phadke naturally looked upon them as very suitable for his purpose and recruited a large number of them.

Phadke has left a diary from which we may get a glimpse of his inner thoughts. He gave lectures to turn the minds of the people against the English. After narrating the various grievances he entertained against the English he writes: "Thinking of thousands of things like this my mind turned against the English, and I wished to ruin them. From morning to night, bathing, eating, sleeping, I was brooding over this and I could get no proper rest. At midnight I used to get up and think how this ruin might be done until I was as one mad. I learnt to fire at targets, to ride, also sword and club exercise." He also collected guns, swords, spears, etc. We get some idea of his plans from the following entry in his diary: "Having obtained Rs. 5,000 from a *Saukar* I proposed to send to all sides three or four men a month in advance that small

gangs might be raised by them from which great fear would come to the English. The mails would be stopped, and the railway and telegraphs interrupted, so that no information could go from one place to another. Then the jails would be opened and all the long-sentenced prisoners would join me, because if the English Government remained they would not get off."

But like the revolutionaries of Bengal at a later date the chief difficulty of Phadke was want of money. He has described with pathos how difficult it was to get money from respectable men for such purpose. "In their hearts they wish the English to be driven out, but you must not ask money of them". So in a desperate mood Phadke conceived the idea of securing money by committing dacoities.

Several dacoities were committed for getting money, and Phadke planned to loot Government Treasury. But he was rudely disillusioned by the conduct of the Ramosis, who were not inspired by any patriotic ideas and merely looked to their personal interests. After committing a dacoity they first of all made away with the booty and then bullied for their share of the division after which they were anxious to return home. They feared to go before guns but had great avarice for money. Disappointed and disgusted at the conduct of the Ramosis, the only class of men who had joined him in large numbers, Phadke left them. The Government had proclaimed a reward of Rs. 3,000 for his arrest, but one Raghunath Moreshwar Bhat came to his help. The latter brought over Ismail Khan Rohilla to him. This Rohilla Chief agreed to supply Phadke 500 Rohillas at Rs. 10 per mensem each and their food, and was to receive Rs. 15 per mensem himself. A formal agreement was signed to this effect. Raghunath also induced a few others to supply men to Phadke, and altogether there was arrangement for 900 armed men, including the 500 Rohillas.

But by this time the news of Phadke's whereabouts came to be known to the Government through the spies, and Major Daniell surrounded the village where Phadke was living. Phadke escaped and fled from place to place, but was pursued day and night by Major Daniell and Abdul Haque, the Police Commissioner of the Nizam of Hyderabad, until they seized him, while asleep, in a temple in the Kaladgi District of Hyderabad, at 3 A. M., on 3 July, 1879.

Wasudeo Balwant Phadke was sentenced to transportation for life. He was fettered and put in a solitary cell in jail at Aden. Nevertheless, he fled from jail on 13 October, 1880, but was recaptured within a few hours. For the next two years and a half he suffered from the rigorous treatment in jail and developed phthisis which brought an end to all his earthly misery on 17 February, 1883.

The single-handed fight of Phadke against the British empire was bound to end in complete failure. But it left its legacy, and the seeds he sowed grew into a mighty banyan tree with its roots spread over India, in about a quarter of a century. His daring spirit was taken up by the Chapekar brothers in Maharashtra, and from them it was taken over by the revolutionaries in Bengal and other parts of India. His method of secretly collecting arms, imparting military training to youths and securing necessary funds by means of political dacoities was adopted by the latter. Phadke may, therefore, be justly called the father of militant nationalism in India.

3. Maharashtra

For nearly twenty years after the arrest of Phadke no further trace of this movement is found in Maharashtra. It was not till the close of the nineteenth century A. D. that we find the revival of the old spirit for which Phadke lived and died. Its first signs in Maharashtra may be

traced to the expression of bitter hatred against the British Government and almost open incitement to rebellion against it. The Ganapati and Shivaji festivals, noted above,[33] were utilized for preaching this new spirit. During the Ganapati festival "leaflets were circulated by school boys and others broadcast through the city, calling the Hindus to arms, urging the Marathas to rebel as Shivaji did, declaring that the dagger of subjection to foreign rule penetrated the bosom of all, and urging that a religious, (or rebellious ?) outbreak should be made the first step towards the overthrow of the alien power."[34] The Shivaji festival also provided suitable opportunities for similar propaganda. A regular society was organized to give physical and military training to the Hindus. The life and soul of this society were the two brothers of a Chitpavan Brahman family of Maharashtra, named Damodar Chapekar and Balakrishna Chapekar. The following verses were recited by them at the Shivaji and Ganapati festivals :

I. SHIVAJI SLOKAS

"Merely reciting Shivaji's story like a lord does not secure independence ; it is necessary to be prompt in engaging in desperate enterprises like Shivaji and Baji ; knowing, you good people should take up swords and shields at all events now ; we shall cut off countless heads of enemies. Listen. We shall risk our lives on the battlefield in a national war ; we shall shed upon the earth the life-blood of the enemies who destroy our religion ; we shall die after killing only, while you will hear the story like women."

II. GANAPATI SLOKAS

"Alas, you are not ashamed to remain in servitude ; try therefore to commit suicide ; alas, like butchers, the wicked in their monstrous atrocity kill calves and kine ; free her

(the cow) from her trouble ; die, but kill the English ; do not remain idle or thereby burden the earth ; this is called Hindusthan, how is it that the English rule here ?"[35]

On June 22, 1897, the Chapekar brothers murdered two British officers, Mr. Rand and Lieutenant Ayerst, while these were returning from the Government House, Poona, after attending the Diamond Jubilee celebration of Queen Victoria. They intended to kill only Rand, but the other who was closely following in another carriage was shot by accident or through mistake. The murder of Rand was meant to avenge the insults and oppressions perpetrated under his authority in connection with the measures undertaken to prevent the spread of plague epidemic.

The Chapekar brothers were hanged, but two brothers, who had been rewarded by the Government for information leading to the arrest and conviction of Damodar Chapekar, were murdered in February, 1899. Evidently, the society founded by the Chapekar brothers survived their death. No other activities of this body are known, but two unsuccessful attempts on the life of a chief constable in Poona. may be ascribed to it.

It is, however, known, from the autobiographical sketch of Arabinda Ghose[36] that a secret society was started in Western India before the end of the nineteenth century A. D. with a Rajput noble at the head. It had a Council of five in Bombay with several prominent Maratha politicians as its members.

This Rajput leader was not a prince, that is a Ruling Chief, but a noble of the State with the title of Thakur. The Thakur was not a member of the Council in Bombay ; he stood above it as the leader of the whole movement, while the Council helped him to organize Maharashtra and the Maratha States. He himself worked principally upon the Indian army of which he had already

won over two or three regiments. But no further information is available of its activities.

In a series of interesting articles, published in the newspaper *'Kesari'* in the year 1953, Shri P. S. Khankhoje has given an account of the revolutionary activities in Madhya Pradesh since the beginning of the century. He says that inspired by the teachings of Chiplunkar, Ranade and Tilak, he and his fellow-students in a Primary school at Wardha (in Maharashtra) founded a society called Bal Samaj in which, on every Sunday, the lives and the heroic deeds of Indian patriots were discussed. They also studied the lives of Mazzini and Garibaldi, and although most of them were ten to fourteen years old, they were profoundly affected by an anti-British feeling. This feeling was intensified by Agarkar's articles. In 1897 a garland of shoes was put on the neck of the statue of Queen Victoria at Bombay, and it was also tarred. The agitation by the boys of the Bal Samaj against the English rule was growing at Wardha, Nagpur, Amraoti and Yeotmal. Propagandists from Bombay, Poona and other parts also began to arrive in Berar and Madhya Pradesh. Articles in the *Kesari* on Rand's murder by the Chapekar brothers became the *'Bhagavad-Gita'* of the revolutionary boys. Tilak's imprisonment made them feel that he was a God's *Avatar*.

While Tilak was in prison, a young man from Poona came to Wardha and told Khankhoje and others that Tilak had started a secret organization to drive the British out of India. He requested them to start a branch of it in this part. It was later known that the Chapekars were members of that organization. Khankhoje, with others, started an organization called Arya Bandhav Samaj to serve as a revolutionary centre for propaganda. In order to enter the Samaj one had to perform sacrificial rites and to solemnly declare that he will dedicate his life for his country's freedom. The ideal of the Samaj was to drive the

British out of India by war, and by collecting a secret army of thousands of batches of four. Attempts were made to form batches of four in different places. Among the leading members of the Samaj were Vrajachand Potdar and Jamnalal Bajaj, who later became the patron of the Gandhi Ashram. The Samaj at one time decided to follow the example of Wasudeo Balwant Phadke by raising an army of aboriginal Bhils and Gonds, and the work was entrusted to Khankhoje. The plan was to take the British depots by training the Gonds, but the police got the information and Khankhoje was arrested. As his father explained away his absence from home as due to a religious turn of mind, the police released him. A few months later, branches of the Samaj were formed at Gurukul and Lahore. After the release of Tilak the Samaj members were in close contact with him. In 1900 the Samaj decided to work among soldiers in the Indian army, but did not achieve much success.

The Samaj had also an idea of manufacturing rifles, and advice was sought of Dr. Khaparde and Tilak. As there was no good opportunity for this in India it was felt that some of them must go abroad, and for that purpose it was necessary to complete higher education. So Khankhoje returned to Wardha and completed his studies. Since then Arya Bandhav Samaj came into contact with the political leaders of the Panjab like Lajpat Rai and Bhai Parmanand. Due to this association with the Panjab revolutionaries the work of the Samaj progressed very much in Maharashtra. The routine work of the Samaj was also changed. Primary military training like drill, guerilla warfare, military science, etc. were discussed in secret meetings, and it was decided that the members of the Samaj should be trained in various military exercises as well as wrestling.

As there was no high school at Wardha many members of the Samaj from different places came to Nagpur as a matter of course. One member of the Samaj was sent

to Baroda for military training and he established the contact between Baroda and Nagpur revolutionary centres. Contacts were also established with some revolutionaries at Hyderabad. Since 1901 there was some connection between the Samaj and the revolutionaries of Bengal, but after the Swadeshi movement a closer connection was established through Sakharam Ganesh Deuskar. Khankhoje then decided to go abroad in order to get military training, and in this he was encouraged by Tilak. With his departure for Japan closes the account of his activities in India. Khankhoje concludes by paying homage to Tilak who was 'regarded as the high preceptor of the revolutionaries and the young men of the Secret Societies spread over different provinces.'

4. Bengal

About the same time revolutionary movement was also developed in Bengal. Its early history[37] is associated with the name of Pramatha Mitra, better known as P. Mitra. Mr. P. Mitra was a Barrister and made four unsuccessful attempts, before 1901, to organize revolutionary societies in Bengal. When Surendra Nath Banerji was imprisoned for defamation, he hatched a plot to rescue him from jail by bringing several thousands of men from outside. For the purpose of organizing this he proceeded to Barisal, but waited in vain for the promised signal from the leaders in Calcutta.

Mr. Mitra's opportunity came when he was approached by an organized Association known as the 'Anusilan Samiti'. Satish Chandra Basu, one of the leading spirits of this Association, has himself given an account of its origin and early history which may be summed up as follows :

I was a member of the Gymnastic Club of the General Assembly's Institution and was a student of Professor Wann, who was the President of the Club. 'Kasinath Literary Club' was associated with the Gymnastic Club.

Once the Secretary of this literary club brought English-made papers for writing minutes, but Wann said that "either you must bring Indian-made paper or I shall close this club". I then thought of the teachings of Swami Vivekananda, particularly his instructions for the use of Swadeshi goods, gymnastic, *lathi*-play, sanitary work in the *Bustees* etc. I then went to see Swami Saradananda. He told me : "You should never give up the work which you have begun. This is the instruction of Swamiji, who further said : 'Even a crow tied to a rope makes all kinds of efforts to get free ; why should not you lay down your lives for the freedom of the country ?' I have given instructions to Sister Nivedita and she should give you the necessary directions." Sister Nivedita told us : "You know the teachings of Swamiji ; so you should improve your health and do all kinds of physical exercise including the use of *lathi* and other things."

Soon after this we opened a small club for *lathi*-play in Madan Mitra's Lane. We requested Sri Naren Bhattacharya to give a name to this club. He suggested the name "Anusilan Samiti". The name was taken from a book of Bankim Chandra.

Soon after this Sasi Chaudhuri took me to Asutosh Chaudhuri. After hearing about our club he sent me with a letter to Barrister Pramatha Mitra. When I told him of our activities he grew very excited and embraced me. He became the Commander-in-Chief or the leader of the club. A week later, he sent for me and said that a group of people have come from Baroda, who hold the same view, and are prepared to give all kinds of military training. He asked us to amalgamate with this body, and we agreed. The combined group was constituted into an Association with the following office-bearers : President—Pramatha Mitra ; Vice-Presidents—Chitta Ranjan Das and Arabinda Ghose ; Treasurer—Surendra Nath Tagore.

A new club for physical exercise was established in the Circular Road by Jatindra Nath Bandyopadhyaya, who came from Baroda. The club in Madan Mitra's Lane continued as a separate unit for junior members, while the senior members went to the Circular Road Club and learnt physical exercise under Jatin Babu. All members of the club had to be initiated, and there was a reference to the setting up of the kingdom of righteousness (*Dharma-rajya samsthapana*) in the *mantra*. Among the workers of the Training Department were many members of the 'Anusilan Samiti', and there were, besides, many others including Barin Ghosh, Abinash Bhattacharya and Pandit Sakharam Ganesh Deuskar.

Some workers of this club committed political dacoities. The first attempt was made at Tarakeswar. Later, some money was taken from a Feringhee. Once a member went to Sister Nivedita and asked for a revolver in order to commit dacoity, but she refused and became very angry. Mr. Mitra was also against these dacoities. Soon after this there was quarrel between Jatin Babu and Barin Ghosh. As a result of this the Circular Road Club was closed and Jatin Babu went to his native village where he established an *ashrama* and led the life of a recluse. Another club was established at Rambagan. It was named 'United Friends' Club' and provided training in sword and *lathi* play.

This is the summary of the statement made by Satish Chandra Basu, and it may be taken as substantially correct. The part played by Arabinda Ghose is described in some detail by Abinash Chandra Bhattacharya, a prominent member of the Anusilan Samiti. He says :

"In 1902[38] Arabinda Ghose sent Jatindra Nath Bandyopadhyaya from Baroda with a view to establishing some revolutionary societies in Bengal. The aim of these societies was to achieve independence of India. Jatin Babu set up an organization in 108-A Circular Road.

"A club for physical exercise was opened in the ground adjoining Jatindra Babu's house where boxing, cycling and *lathi*-play were taught. Lectures were also given on the lives of Garibaldi, Mazzini and on the revolutionary movements in different countries. These lectures were delivered by P. Mitra, S. G. Deuskar (a Maratha scholar) and Surendra Nath Tagore. Funds required for the purpose were subscribed by C. R. Das and others. A large amount was spent by Arabinda from the very beginning. Jatin Babu's club was dissolved as a result of his quarrels with Barin, but Arabinda came to Calcutta and settled the differences between us. Even after we were separated Arabinda paid the expenses both of Jatindra Babu and ourselves. I went to Surendra Nath Banerji and told him about our Secret Society. He told me that he was sympathetic towards them and would give as much financial help as was possible, but added, 'I am grown old and cannot take part in the activities. You are young men, carry them on."

It would appear from the above two accounts that by the year 1901 A. D. a revolutionary society, known as Anusilan Samiti, was organized in Bengal under the leadership of P. Mitra. A similar organization was planned by Arabinda Ghose, who was then in Baroda and sent Jatindra Nath Bandyopadhyaya to Bengal. He set up an organization which was soon amalgamated with the Anusilan Samiti. The main activities of the Samiti were at first carried on by some clubs in Calcutta which gave training in physical exercise, including sword and *lathi*-play. They also committed dacoities, though this was not liked by P. Mitra, the President.

The above statements are supplemented by several other persons. The members of the Anusilan Samiti, mostly young students, were trained in military drill, sword-play, boxing, wrestling, and other kinds of exercise. They were also given moral and patriotic training through regular weekly classes and general conversations by eminent men like

Rabindra Nath Tagore, Gurudas Banerji, B. C. Pal, and others, including those named above. The members practised worship of arms in place of the images of Durga. There were various branches of the Anusilan Samiti, and there were probably also several secret societies acting independently of one another.

Reference must be made in some details to the early career of Arabinda Ghose whose name is mentioned above, and who was destined to achieve vorld-wide fame as a spiritual leader at no distant date.[39] He was born on 15 August, 1872. His father, K. D. Ghose, an England-returned medical officer, was so strongly anglicized that he sent Arabinda to England at the age of eight.

Arabinda, as a child, spoke only English, and under the strict instructions of his father he was brought up in England in such a way that he knew nothing of India and her culture. Curiously enough, the father sent his son cuttings from the Calcutta newspaper, the *Bengalee*, marking passages relating to the ill treatment of Indians by Englishmen, and wrote letters to him denouncing the British Government in India as a heartless Government. This turned the mind of the boy even at an early age to the idea of liberating India. He delivered many revolutionary speeches at the Indian *Majlis* at Cambridge of which he was Secretary for some time. This was partly the reason why, though he was successful in the competitive examination for the Indian Civil Service, he was disqualified on the ostensible ground of failure in a riding test.

On returning to India in 1893 Arabinda was appointed Vice-Principal of the Baroda College. During 1893-4 he contributed a series of articles to the *Indu Prakash* of Bombay to which reference has been made above.[40] These articles frightened Ranade and other Congress leaders and so the series was dropped at the instance of the proprietor of the paper.

Arabinda held fast to the resolve he had made in England to devote his life to the liberation of his country. He set himself to the task of organizing a revolutionary party in Bengal. He had studied with great interest the revolutions and rebellions which led to national liberation of other countries,—the struggle against the English in Medieval France and the revolts which liberated Italy and America. He received inspiration from these movements and their leaders, specially Jeanne d'Arc and Mazzini. He had heard of the revolutionary societies in Bengal and sent a young Bengali, named Jatindra Nath Bandyopadhyaya, to Calcutta towards the end of 1901. Jatindra, through the help of Arabinda, had been enlisted as a trooper in the cavalry regiment of Baroda, in spite of the instructions of the British Government prohibiting enlistment of any Bengali in any army in India.

As mentioned above, Jatindra came into contact with the Anusilan Samiti and acted in co-operation with it. He was shortly joined by Arabinda's younger brother, Barindra, and several branches of the Samiti were started in Calcutta. But soon dissensions arose among them and Arabinda himself came to Calcutta to unite the different secret societies in Bengal with a common programme and under a common direction. He spent a large amount of money for these different societies and funds were also subscribed by C. R. Das and others. Unfortunately, a quarrel broke out hetween Jatindra and Barindra in 1903, and Arabinda came to Calcutta a second time. He made extensive tours, visited the different secret societies, and also met leading men of some districts. He found that in Bengal the prevailing mood was apathy and despair. He concluded that he must bide his time, and continued his political work behind the scenes in silence. The moment for public work had not yet come. The Anusilan Samiti, however, continued. How it was galvanized into activity by the Swadeshi movement will be related in the next volume.

Reference should be made in this connection to two non-Indians who played some part in this early revolutionary movement in Bengal. One was the Irish lady, Miss Margaret Noble, a disciple of Swami Vivekananda and better known as Sister Nivedita, who acted in close association with P. Mitra, Arabinda, C. R. Das and Surendra Nath Tagore who formed the first Executive Committee of the Anusilan Samiti after it had coalesced with the Baroda Group, as mentioned above. These and Nivedita may be regarded as the five members of the first Council for revolutionary actvities in Bengal. But what active part, besides giving general advice and encouragement, Nivedita played in the revolutionary movement it is difficult to say. She devoted herself to the cultural regeneration of India, and her speeches and writings proved a source of great inspiration to young Bengal.

Like Nivedita, another foreigner, named Okakura, a Japanese, also influenced the revolutionary movement in Bengal. He was brought to India by Miss Macleod, an American disciple of Swami Vivekananda. Okakura was the author of the *Ideals of the East*. He emphasized the unity of Asiatic culture and gave out that while the rest of Asia was organized to drive the Europeans from Asia, India alone was inactive. He therefore suggested that India must be made independent so that she may join the anti-European League. With a view to preach this message of independence for India, Okakura organized a small group which included Nivedita. This was not liked by Swami Vivekananda. Questioned by Miss Grinstidle, a co-worker of Nivedita, about his objection, Swamiji is said to have made the following reply : "What has Nivedita done in politics ? I have travelled all over India for organizing revolution, manufacturing guns etc. I have made friedship with Sir Hiram Maxim. But India is in putrefaction. So I want a band

of workers who would, as *Brahmacharins*, educate the people and revitalise the country." To Sakharam Ganesh Deuskar Swamiji is said to have remarked that India would be a powder-magazine and there would be a revolution before his death.

Nivedita had all the six volumes of the *Autobiography* of Mazzini. The first volume she presented to the revolutionary society and it was circulated all over Bengal and widely read : The Chapter on 'Guerilla Warfare' at the end of this volume was typed and copies were widely circulated so that the members might be trained in this mode of warfare which was then the chief objective of the party.

Later, in 1908, Nivedita presented to Bhupendra Nath Datta, just before his imprisonment, the remaining five volumes of Mazzini's *Autobiography* together with two books of Peter Kroptkin, viz, (1) *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*, and (2) *In Russian and French prisons*. She asked Bhupendra to read the two works of Kroptkin before going to jail and explained to him the real nature of the Russian revolution as a war of the poor against the rich.[41]

All these throw some light on the influences that were at work and shaped the revolutionary movement in Bengal.

CHAPTE VI

MUSLIM POLITICS

A. MUSLIM ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE HINDUS

Reference has been made above[1] to the anti-Muslim feeling among the Hindus at the beginning of British rule in Bengal. Other causes gradually widened the gulf between the two communities. The hostile attitude of the Muslims towards the British and their strong aversion to merely secular education kept them severely aloof from English education imparted in schools and colleges. As noted above,[2] the foundation of the Hindu College in 1817 gave a great impetus to the English education among the Hindus, but the Muslims made very little progress in it during the next fifty years. The comparative position of the Hindus and Muslims in English education will be evident from the following figures: In 1865, 9 Hindus and no Muhammadan passed the M. A. Examination; 41 Hindus and 1 Muhammadan passed the B. A.; and 17 students, all Hindus, passed the Law Examination. All the Medical graduates were also Hindus. In 1867, 88 Hindus and not a single Muhammadan passed the M. A. and B. A. Examinations.[3]

The disparity in progress widened the gulf between the Hindus and Muslims. For, by virtue of greater proficiency in English the Hindus held most of the Government offices open to the Indians, their intellectual faculties were more highly developed, and their political outlook became much broader.

A very frank and lucid exposition of the relation between the Hindus and Mussalmans, as conceived by the

latter, was given by a liberal Muslim leader, Mr. R. M. Sayani, in his Presidential Address at the twelfth Indian National Congress held in Calcutta in 1896. The following extract admirably delineates the sentiments which powerfully influenced the Muslim community as a whole throughout the nineteenth century:

"Before the advent of the British in India, the Mussulmans were the rulers of the country. The Mussulmans had, therefore, all the advantages appertaining to the ruling class. The sovereign and the chiefs were their co-religionists, and so were the great landlords and the great officials. The court language was their own. Every place of trust and responsibility or carrying influence and high emoluments was by birthright theirs. The Hindus did occupy some position, but the Hindu holders of position were but the tenants-at-will of the Mussulmans. The Mussulmans had complete access to the sovereigns and to the chiefs. They could, and did, often eat at the same table with them. They could also, and often did, intermarry. The Hindus stood in awe of them. Enjoyment and influence and all the good things of the world were theirs. By a stroke of misfortune, the Mussulmans had to abdicate their position and descend to the level of their Hindu fellow-countrymen. The Hindus who had before stood in awe of their Mussulman masters were thus raised a step by the fall of their said masters, and with their former awe dropped their courtesy also. The Mussulmans, who are a very sensitive race, naturally resented the treatment and would have nothing to do either with their rulers or with their fellow-subjects. Meanwhile the noble policy of the new rulers of the country introduced English education into the country. The learning of an entirely unknown foreign language, of course, required hard application and industry. The Hindus were accustomed to this, as even under the Mussulman rule they had practically to master

a foreign tongue, and so easily took to the new education. But the Mussulmans had not yet become accustomed to this sort of thing, and were, moreover, not then in a mood to learn, much less to learn anything that required hard work and application, especially as they had to work harder than their former subjects, the Hindus. Moreover, they resented competing with the Hindus, whom they had till recently regarded as their inferiors. The result was that so far as education was concerned, the Mussulmans who were once superior to the Hindus now actually became their inferiors. Of course, they grumbled and groaned, but the irony of fate was inexorable. The stern realities of life were stronger than fiction. The Mussulmans were gradually ousted from their lands, their offices ; in fact everything was lost save their honour. The Hindus, from a subservient state, came into the lands, offices and other worldly advantages of their former masters. Their exultation knew no bounds, and they trod upon the heels of their former masters. The Mussulmans would have nothing to do with anything in which they might have to come into contact with the Hindus. They were soon reduced to a state of utter poverty. Ignorance and apathy seized hold of them while the fall of their former greatness rankled in their hearts."

This brilliant analysis enables us to understand the inner feelings that alienated the Muslims from the Hindus, and also the reason why the political outlook of the two communities was very different from the very beginning. This was clearly manifested in the Wahabi Movement mentioned above. It was a purely Muslim movement for establishing Muslim rule in India, and the Hindus stood aloof from it.[3a]

The political aloofness of the two communities was more convincingly demonstrated by the fact that the muslims did not take any active part in the different political organizations referred to above.[4] There was hardly any

Muslim on the Committees of Landholders' Society, British India Society and the British Indian Association. On the other hand, as soon as the Muslims became politically conscious, they started separate organizations of their own. A 'Mohammedan Association' was started some time before 31st January, 1856. The Hindus took this separatist tendency as quite natural in view of the position of the Muslim community as a separate unit, and the Committee of the British Indian Association expressed rejoicing at the formation of this communal organization. When the Hindu Mela and the National Society were started by the Hindus on communal basis, the Muslim leader, Nawab Amir Ali Khan, organized the 'National Mohammedan Association' in Calcutta with a view to uniting all classes of Muhammadans so that they might work together for the common good. In 1863 Abdul Latif founded the 'Mohammedan Literary Society,' its object being to interest its members in present day politics and modern thought and learning.[5]

It was not till the third quarter of the nineteenth century that the Muslims appreciated the value of English education and seriously took to it. As a result, in the race for progress, the Muslims were handicapped by a time-lag of about fifty years.

A very good glimpse of the Muslims and their politics in the eighties may be had from the writings of W. S. Blunt. He was a liberal-minded Englishman who openly protested against the British policy in Egypt and made a common cause with the Egyptian Mahdi in his fight against the English. His two books, *Secret History of the English* and the *Future of Islam* endeared him to the whole Muslim world, and he found a warm welcome awaiting him in India, when he visited this country in 1883. He mixed freely and intimately with the Muslim leaders of all shades of opinion, and his observations on Muslim politics should,

therefore, command both respect and confidence.

From the very moment of his landing on Indian soil, Blunt received complaints about Hindus from the Muslims. As soon as he got down at Tuticorin, the local Muslims, who went to the pier to receive him, "complained of being subject to annoyance from the Hindus, who came with drums outside their mosque, and that the magistrate, being a Hindu, would not prevent it."[6]

In Calcutta Maulvi Sayid Amir Hussain, Deputy Magistrate and a friend of Amir Ali, told him that "the Bengali Mohammedans were an oppressed community, the Hindus having it all their own way, and there was very little courage among them, though the antiquated Mohammedans and Hindus lived on excellent terms. They dared not take any prominent part against the Government."[7] The position is further elucidated by the following extract :

"Delawar Huseyn, a deputy-magistrate and a sensible man, gave the same melancholy account of the poverty of the Mohammedans in Bengal. I fear their case is nearly hopeless. In spite of their large population, they are without influence. The mass of them are extremely poor, mere peasants, or, in the town, day-labourers. They have no commercial connection, and the sons of the few rich men are obliged to look to Government employment for a living, whereas the Hindus are rich and pushing. It is a struggle for existence, in which the Mohammedans are the weakest, and so are going to the wall. In the north-west, he tells me, it is not so."[8]

At that time the great agitation over the Ilbert Bill was going on,[8a] and Lord Ripon's Government practically conceded the Anglo-Indian demands by offering a compromise or "concordat" which was strongly opposed by the Hindus. Maulvi Samiulla of Aligarh told Blunt "that the proper conduct for the Mohammedans was being debated, some being for expressing themselves satisfied, others for

making common cause with the Hindus.......He had seen Amir Ali yesterday, who had changed his mind and was now on the Government side. He wants, the Maulvi explained naively, to get promotion, and that is why he supports the compromise. He himself was for a moderate attitude." Blunt's reply to this Muslim gentleman and his companions is characteristic of him and may be quoted in full.

"I spoke my mind very plainly, and told them that if they deserted the Hindus in this instance, they would never have any reform given or justice done them for another twenty years. They must sink their differences and their little private interests if they wanted to force the Government's hand. The Bill was the battle-ground on which the whole principle of legislation for India was being fought ; and the Mohammedans could turn the scale by their attitude one way or the other. The young men warmly applauded this, and I think, too, the Maulvi was partly convinced. I told them, if the Mohammedans only knew their power they would not be neglected and ill treated by the Government as they now were. In England we were perpetually scared at the idea of a Mohammedan rising in India, and any word uttered by a Mohammedan was paid more attention to than that of twenty Hindus. But, if they sat still, thanking Providence for the favours which were denied them, the English public would be only too happy to leave them as they were. The Maulvi promised to make my opinion known at a Conference which had been summoned for this evening to consider the action of the Mohammedans, and so I trust I may have done some good, at least with the liberal party. Of Abd-el-Latif I feel more doubtful, for there is great ill-feeling in Calcutta between the old-fashioned Mohammedans and the Hindus."[9]

Two days later, Blunt had a talk with Maulvi A. M. 'He said that none of the Mohammedans wished to do

away altogether with English Government, as it would only lead to fighting, as there was no chance of Mohammedans and Hindus agreeing for a century to come, but of course they did not like English administration. It favoured the Hindus unduly. But, left to themselves, they should be able to hold their own in all Northern India. The English policy, however, had been to suppress them, and throw obstacles in the way of their educating themselves and learning their own power. The Maulvis of Calcutta were terribly ignorant of politics, and of all that was going on in the world. At the time of the Egyptian War they had not known whether Egypt lay North or South or East or West.........Then Abd-el-Latif's son, in European clothes, joined us, and we got on the Ilbert Bill, as to which I exhorted them all strongly to make a concordat with the Hindus, helping them this time on a promise of help from them when their own interests were at stake......I had it out, however, with Abd-el-Rahman and hope he will influence his father. Unless the Mohammedans show their teeth on an occasion of this sort, they will never get attention paid to their wrongs."[10]

Blunt's diary continues :

"Next came Surendra Nath Bannerji. He is very angry at the Ilbert Bill compromise, and let slip the *gros mot* of 'revolution' in regard to it. He was very urgent with me to get the Mohammedans to join them in protesting, and I promised to do my best this evening at Amir Ali's dinner. It is high time certainly they should sink difference, but the Mohammedans are hard to move. Their position was well explained a little later by our last visitor this morning, Maulvi Ahmed, Municipal Councillor and an independent man. He explained that there was hardly a leading man among the Calcutta Mohammedans who had any means apart from his Government pay. Neither Amir Ali nor Abd-el-Latif could afford to come forward as a

champion, as all their prospects depended on the Government. Maulvi Ahmed drew a most gloomy picture of Mohammedan prospects. They were all, he said, in despair here in Bengal. It was immpossible for them to do anything, impossible to combine with the Hindus who were so selfish, they wanted every post for themselves. Out of forty-eight Municipal Councillors there were only five Mohammedans, and as more power was given to the natives the Mohammedan position would get worse. It was their poverty which stood in their way. They could not pay for the education necessary to pass the competitive examinations, so they were left behind. I tried to convert him to my view of engergetic action, but in vain. There was no one to take the lead, and it would result in no good.........

"I had an opportunity of saying a few words to Abd-el-Latif about the attitude Mohammedans should take in this Ilbert quarrel, and he agreed with me that it might be well if they showed their teeth a little. But he is a cautious man and would promise nothing. With Amir Ali and Amir Huseyn I was able to do more, and I shall be surprised if, at the meeting of the National Mohammedan Society tomorrow, they do not take my view. I proposed that they should address a dignified and moderate protest to the Viceroy admitting that the Ilbert Bill did not immediately affect the Mohammedan community, but taking their stand on the principle that the proposed compromise affected the rule of equality before the law. At the same time I advised Amir Ali to come to a regular concordat with the Hindus for their mutual benefit."[11]

Nevertheless, Amir Ali supported the Government view in the meeting of the Muslims (probably held under the auspices of the National Muhammadan Association). Blunt mournfully remarks : "his attitude with regard to the Ilbert Compromise is not that of a leader."[12]

The difference between the two communities became

accentuated in connection with the legislation for local self-government on elective basis. It is on this occasion that for the first time a demand was made for separate representation of the Muhammadans. It seems, however, that as in later days, the ball was set rolling by the English officials. The Commissioner of the Presidency Division observed in his Report "that the agitators in this matter are Hindus, and that Local Boards, instituted as proposed, will be comprised almost entirely of Hindus to the exclusion of Mohammedans." Quoting this with approval, Mahomed Yusuf spoke as follows in the Legislative Council on May 3, 1883 :

"The Council will be pleased to remember that though in most places the Mohammedan population forms a minority as compared with the larger bodies of the Hindus, still in many places they form a large proportion of the population. Or it may be that in some places, though fewer, the case is the reverse, and the Hindus form a minority. In such cases when there is party spirit and angry feeling between the two classes of people, it is necessary to reserve power for the representation of the minority. The Bill proposes to provide for this by nomination, but it would be an advantage and more fit recognition of the claims of the Mohammedan population if provision could be made in the Bill for the election of Mohammedans by reserving a certain number of membership for that community."[13]

The keynote of this speech is a firm conviction that even in political matters there is no common bond between the two communities and each must be ready to safeguard its own interests. Even more than thirty years before this the English or official view emphasized the communal difference in political matters in connection with the creation of Legislative Councils. Representative assembly in India was regarded as difficult in view of the difference between the Hindus and the Muslims, and Lord Ellenborough even

suggested the creation of two separate legislatures for the two communities. In those early days a vigorous protest against this was made by a Hindu politician, and no Muslim is known to have come forward to support the British or official view.[14] But Mahomed Yusuf's speech shows the change that had come over the Muslim community.

This change was not confined to Bengal. It appears from Blunt's diary that the attitude of the Bengali Mussalmans was shared by those in other parts of India. Four Muslim gentlemen, whom Blunt met at Delhi, agreed "that there should be more common action with Hindus. But one of them was of opinion that the Hindus were impracticable, because they would not permit the killing of cows."[15] Nawab Alauddin Ahmad Khan, Chief of Loharo, told Blunt that "what he did not like about the mutineers was that most of them were Hindus."[16]

Reference should also be made in this connection to the influence of Pan-Islamic sentiments upon the minds of Indian Muslims. Some Muslim leaders told Blunt: "During the Egyptian War (1881-12) we all looked to Arabi (Pasha) to restore our fortunes, for we are in a desperate state and need a deliverer."[17] These words are significant. The Indian Muslims had already begun to feel that the Muslims outside India were more nearly allied to them than their neighbours, the Hindus. Such a feeling cuts at the very root of the idea of Indian nationality. For howsoever people might differ regarding the essentials of nationality, one thing is certain. No people can form a nation unless they are united by such common sympathies as do not exist between any constituent part of them and an outside element, and which make them co-operate with each other more willingly than with other people.

The influence of Pan-Islamic feeling may also be traced in the evidence given by the Muslim leaders before the

Hunter Commission, demanding entirely separate arrangements for the education of the Hindu and Muslim boys, insisting upon Urdu as a medium of instruction even in a Province like Bengal where 99 per cent. of the Muslims were ignorant of that language and their spoken language, Bengali, had always been the medium of instruction.[18]

The British Government seem to have been fully aware of the influence of Pan-Islamism on Indian Muslims. Lord Hamilton, the Secretary of State, wrote to the Viceroy, Lord Elgin, on 30 July, 1897 : "......We have, however, a new element of intrigue and commotion introduced into India by the Pan-Islamic Council in Constantinople and the close connection which is being established between the Sultan and Indian Mahomedans."

It has been suggested by the great nationalist leader B. C. Pal that the visit of Djamal Al-din Al-Afghani, the founder of the Pan-Islamic movement, to India about 1880 or 1881 was responsible for the spread of this sentiment among Indian Muslims. To use his own words, "Djamal inoculated eminent Muslim leaders like Abdul Latif and Amir Ali with the virus of his Pan-Islamism."[19] It is, however, difficult to agree with B. C. Pal that Djamal Al-din was mainly rsponsible for the Muslim aloofness from the Hindus. For, there is no evidence to show that before Djamal Al-din's visit to India the educated Muslims of Bengal loyally co-operated with the Hindus in political matters. What has been stated above rather points to the other way.

Sri Pal's statement about the aloofness of the Muslims, based on his own experience, may be accepted as correct. But his view about the state of things before his time, and his diagnosis of the causes for the cleavage between the two, cannot command the same respect and confidence.

So far as evidence goes, the Muslim politics, throughout the nineteenth century, has followed a course different

from that of the Hindus. While the Hindus were developing their political ideas and political organizations on modern lines under the influence of English education, the Muslims launched the Wahabi movement, which was most violent and anti British, and extremely communal in character. How far the outbreak of 1857 was the result of a co-operative movement between the two communities has beed discussed above. Then came the Aligarh movement which, though conceived in a communal spirit, brought about the political and social regeneration of the Muslims. At the same time it widened the political cleavage between the Hindus and Muslims and created a distinct Muslim unit in Indian politics. In view of its great influence over Hindu-Muslim relation it requires a separate treatment.

B. ALIGARH MOVEMENT

The Muslims found themselves in a very sad plight after the suppression of the outbreak of 1857. There was a general impression among the British that the Muslims were the chief instigators and ringleaders of that great outbreak. The consequence was that the hands of repression fell more heavily upon the Muslims than upon the Hindus, and what was worse, the Government came to entertain a permanent distrust of Muslims' loyalty and allegiance to the British. The Muslims lost whatever little political influence they possessed, and their future prospect was indeed very gloomy.

It was at this juncture that Syed Ahmad appeared as the saviour of the Muslim community. The role he played during the Mutiny at Bijnor gave him a distinguished position in the official world and he utilized it fully for the upliftment of the Muslim community. He set before himself the twofold task of bringing about a rapprochement between the British Government and the Muslims and introducing the modern type of education among the Muslims.

For the first object he exerted his utmost to wean away the Muslims from the fruitless, vindictive, and sentimental opposition to the British, and gradually convinced them that their future interests from all points of view depended entirely on the favours of the Government and these could be secured in full measure only by loyal co-operation with the British. On the other hand, he persuaded the Englishmen to believe that the Muslims were not at heart disloyal to the British Crown, that there was nothing in the religious tenets of Islam which, as the Wahabis thought, render it obligatory upon the Muslims to take to *jihad*, i. e. declare a war of independence against the British ; and lastly, that though the Muslims might have been carried away by emotion and erred in 1857 by leading the war against the British, it was merely a passing phase, and a little tact and generous forgiveness on the part of the Government could easily change the Muslims, as a body, into staunch supporters of the Government.

The appeal of Syed Ahmad to the British Government to take kindly to his community came at a very opportune moment. The British, like all imperial powers, instinctively followed the policy of *divide and rule* in governing India. They could not be possibly unaware of the fact that while the Muslims resented the establishment of their political authority the Hindus welcomed it, and so at the beginning they unduly favoured the Hindus. But after two generations of the Hindus had imbibed Western ideas through English education they showed signs of political development which alarmed the Government as anti-British and almost revolutionary. So they eagerly seized the opportunity, offered by Syed Ahmad, of enlisting the support of the great, but politically undeveloped, Muslim community and holding it as a counterpoise to the progressive Hindu community. Henceforth the British Government steadily followed the policy of clogging or putting a brake on one wheel of India's

car of political evolution, so that its progress may be slowed down, even if not altogether stopped. A fair idea of the nature and extent of the distinct change that came over the British attitude towards the Muslims may be gathered from Hunter's book on the Mussulmans, published in 1871, in which he says that "the Musalmans of India are, and have been for many years, a source of chronic danger to the British Power in India."[20]

Syed Ahmad did not confine his attention to the improvement of the relations between the Government and his co-religionists, but also devoted his heart and soul to the regeneration of his community. He raised his voice against Muslim orthodoxy in order to prove that there is nothing in the Quran which stands in the way of the Muslims taking to English education and imbibing rational and advanced ideas as well as scientific knowledge of the West. In short, he urged the Muslims to follow the same line of development which was chalked out by Raja Rammohan Roy almost exactly half a century before. Both shared the same fate. Like Rammohan, Syed Ahmad incurred violent opposition from the orthodox section; he was excommunicated and even threatened with assassination. But truth and courage ultimately triumphed in both cases.

Being convinced that the English education and the Western thought and culture were the only true foundation of all real progress, Syed Ahmad established several institutions for the purpose. He also published a bilingual journal for spreading liberal ideas on social reform. He visited England in 1869 and after his return in 1870 carried on a vigorous propaganda for the spread of English education and Western culture among his community. With this object in view he founded the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh in 1877.

The Muslim community derived as much, if not more, impetus to progress on modern lines from this College,

as the Hindu community did from the Hindu College founded sixty years before. The College provided for liberal education in arts and sciences through the medium of English language, under a succession of able Principals, recruited from England. It was a residential institution and helped a great deal in developing the mental outlook and personality of the young Muslim students on liberal lines.

Syed Ahmad also started Muhammadan educational conference as a general forum for spreading liberal ideas among the members of his community. He had gathered round him a band of faithful followers who spread his ideas with conspicuous success. He thus inaugurated a new era in the life of Indian Muslims and infused fresh blood into the Muslim community at one of its greatest crises in life.

The efforts of Syed Ahmad were not confined to the social and religious reforms. He gave a distinctly new turn to Muslim politics which became anti-Hindu, and therefore also anti-Congress, for he looked upon the Indian National Congress as a Hindu organization. It is not an easy task to find out the basic principles on which his political views rested. For, he gave expression to contradictory views which cannot be reconciled with one another. In a speech delivered in 1884, he emphasized the fact that the terms Hindu and Mohamedan were only meant for religious distinction, but they formed one nation. In 1888, however, he referred to the Hindus and Muslims as two warring nations who could not lead a common life if the British were to leave India.[21] He once bestowed high praises upon the Bengalis whom he described as the "head and crown of all the different communities of Hindustan". But later, the abuses of Bengalis formed a prominent feature of the *Aligarh Institute Gazette* edited by him.[22] In 1877 he organized and presided over a meeting at Aligarh in which Surendra Nath Banerjee delivered a speech in favour of simultaneous examinations for Indian Civil Service in England and India,

and a re olution in favour of it was unanimously passed; but, later, Syed Ahmad cpposed the idea as it would mean Hindu predominance in higher appointments.[23]

It is, however, not difficult to understand Syed Ahmad's opposition to the Congress. The Congress fought for a representative government on British lines. This meant the rule of the majority community. As the Muslims formed only a fourth of the total population in India, they could never hope to wield any real power in a democratic form of Government. Syed Ahmad was not a dupe of the Hindu political slogan of Hindu-Muslim fraternity or fusion of Hindus and Mussalmans. As early as 1883 he delivered a long speech[24] deprecating the system of representative institutions even for local self-government, and particularly the principle of election, pure and simple, in constituting Local Boards and District Boards, for fear that "the larger community would totally override the interests of the smaller community."

In this speech Syed Ahmad harps upon the elements of discord and disunion that divide India. "In one and the same district", says he, "the population may consist of various creeds and various nationalities". The whole speech is an eloquent plea against the conception of Indian nationality, and indicates the wide chasm that divided the Hindu and Muslim leaders in political thoughts and ideas. For, it should be remembered that that speech was delivered in the same year when the Indian Association of Calcutta had summoned the National Conference, the first All-India political organization, and only two years before the Indian National Congress held its first session. This speech, however, did not stand alone. As a matter of fact Syed Ahmad and his followers, in their speeches and writings, were never tired of emphasizing that India was inhabited by different nations with different social, political, religious and historical traditions. All these ideas

were brought to a head in a violent opposition to the Indian National Congress since its very inception. Syed Ahmad looked upon the system of representative government demanded by the Congress as dangerous to the interests of Muslims. He even broadly hinted that if the demand were conceded the Muslim minority might be forced to take up sword to prevent the tyranny of the majority.

The following lines clearly indicate the trend of thought which permeates his speeches and writings :

"In a country like India where homogeneity does not exist in any one of these fields (nationality, religion, ways of living, customs, mores, culture, and historical traditions), the introduction of representative government cannot produce any beneficial results; it can only result in interfering with the peace and prosperity of the land. ......The aims and objects of the Indian National Congress are based upon an ignorance of history and present-day realities ; they do not take into consideration that India is inhabited by different nationalities ;......I consider the experiment which the Indian National Congress wants to make fraught with dangers and suffering for all the nationalities of India, specially for the Muslims. The Muslims are in a minority, but they are a highly united minority. At least traditionally they are prone to take the sword in hand when the majority oppresses them. If this happens, it will bring about disasters greater than the ones which came in the wake of the happenings of 1857.... . The Congress cannot rationally prove its claim to represent the opinions, ideals, and aspirations of the Muslims."[25]

In spite of the theory of one-nation propounded by Syed Ahmad in a speech in 1884, referred to above, the movement inaugurated by him rested on the solid basis of the two-nation theory. The object and ideal of the Aligarh Movement may be formulated in the shape of four fundamental principles as follows :

(a) The Hindus and Muslims form two separate political entities with separate outlook and conflicting interests.

(b) The grant of representative institutions based on democratic principles of appointment to high offices by open competitive examination in India would be detrimental to Muslims as they would be subject to Hindu domination which is far worse than British rule.

(c) Consequently the Muslims should regard the paramountcy of the British as the chief safeguard of their interests and keep themselves aloof from political agitation against the Government.

(d) As the Muslim interests are quite safe in the hands of the British, the Muslims should interest themselves in cultural development and avoid politics except in so far as it is necessary to counterbalance the mischief of Hindu political agitator.

In support of the last two points it may be pointed out that he declined to support the "National Muhammadan Association" founded in Calcutta in 1877 by Amir Ali and a young group of Muhammadans.

The Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh became the chief centre of the propaganda against the Congress under the direction of its Principal, Mr. Beck, who seems to have been the right-hand man—the friend, philosopher, and guide—of Syed Ahmad.

Beck took charge of the *Institute Gazette*, the literary organ of the Aligarh College, and edited it on behalf of Syed Ahmad. He poured forth venoms on the Bengalis for their advanced political and social ideas. In issue after issue he published political articles, whose central idea was that India contained two or more nations, that Parliamentary government was unsuited to India, and in the event of its being granted, the Hindus, who formed the majority, "would be absolute masters as no Muhammadan Emperor ever was."[26]

When, in 1889, Charles Bradlaugh introduced a Bill in the British House of Commons for setting up democratic form of Government in India, Beck prepared a memorial against it on behalf of the Muslims. It was argued that democratic form of government was unsuited to India which was not one single nation. Beck even took a batch of Aligarh College boys to Delhi, and posted them at the gate of Jama Masjid. There, on a certain Friday after prayers, he obtained the signatures of 20,735 Muslims on this memorial falsely representing to the signatories that the memorial was intended as a protest against the Hindu efforts to stop cow-slaughter."[27]

It was mainly through Beck's efforts that in August, 1888, was established the 'United Indian Patriotic Association' at Aligarh in which both Hindus and Musalmans joined. The objects of the Association were to carry on anti-Congress propaganda in England.[28] But the idea of a joint Hindu-Muslim organization was soon discarded, and a purely Muslim organization under the name of 'Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental Defence Association of Upper India' was founded in 1893, at the instance of Mr. Beck.

The main objects of the Association were: (a) to place the opinions of Musalmans before Englishmen and the Government of India and to protect their political rights; (b) to prevent political agitation from spreading among the Musalmans; and (c) to strengthen British rule and create a sense of loyalty among the people.

In this new organization, of which Beck became the Secretary, Musalmans were separated from other Indian communities but joined the Englishmen. The name 'Defence Association' was borrowed from the Anglo-Indian Defence Association which had been established in 1883 at the time of the Ilbert Bill agitation, but which had ceased to exist after completing its work.[29]

Mr Beck made a systematic effort to alienate the Muslims

from the Hindus. As an illustration we may quote the following extract from an article he wrote in an English Journal : "The objective of the Congress is to transfer the political control of the country from the British to the Hindus. It demands the repeal of the Arms Act, reduction of military expenditure, and the consequential weakening of frontier defences. Mussalmans can have no sympathy with these demands.........It is imperative for the Muslim and the British to unite with a view to fight these agitators and prevent the introduction of democratic form of government, unsuited as it is to the needs and the genius of the country. We, therefore, advocte loyalty to the Government and Anglo-Muslim co-operation."[30]

Beck's contribution to the anti-Hindu bias in Aligarh Movement was very considerable. The personal influence exerted by Beck upon Syed Ahmad was believed to be so great that one Muslim writer humorously remarked that "the College is of Syed Ahmad and the order is of Beck." Mr. Morrison, who succeeded Mr. Beck as Principal on the latter's death in 1899, and continued in this office till 1905, followed in the footsteps of his predecessor.

Thanks to the efforts of the founder and the first two Principals of the Aligarh College, an open manifestation of uncompromising hostility against the Indian National Congress formed the basic political creed of the Aligarh Movement.

Syed Ahmad and his followers regarded the Congress as inimical to their true interests. According to him "the Congress is in reality a civil war without arms." "The ultimate object of the Congress was to rule the country ; and although they wished to do it in the name of all people of India, the Muslims would be helpless as they would be in a minority." Again he observed "that a 'national' Congress could not be composed of two nations who had such different opinions and only happened to

agree on some small points."[31] In short, Syed Ahmad looked upon the Congress as a machinery devised by the Hindus to further their own interests at the cost of the Muslims. Hence we find an insistent opposition to the Congress from Syed Ahmad and his school. There were Muslim leaders like Badruddin Tyabji and Sayani in Bombay, Nawab Syed Mahomed Bahadur in Madras, A. Rasul in Bengal, Maulvi Mazar-ul-Haq in Bihar and others who regarded themselves as Indians first and Muslims afterwards. They wholeheartedly supported the Congress, but their number was few and their followers, fewer still. In general it may be said that the Muslims of Northern India, at any rate, were, generally speaking, as firmly attached to the policy of Syed Ahmed as the Hindus in India to the Indian National Congress.

Many leaders of the Congress were, however, loath to admit this patent truth. The official history of the Congress denies that the Muslims were opposed to the Congress. It makes much of the fact that "Sheik Raza Hussein Khan produced at the fourth session (1888, Allahabad) a *fatwa* supporting the Congress from the Shams-ul-ulma, the leader of the Sunni community of Lakhnau", and declared that "it is not the Muslims but their official masters who are opposed to the Congress."[32] A reference to the number of Muslim delegates present at the different sessions of the Congress and the part which they took in its deliberations would undoubtedly go against the position maintained in the official history of the Congress. Even some of the stalwarts of the Congress in those days regretfully admitted the hostile attitude of the Muslims towards the Congress. Thus Surendra Nath Banerji writes : "The Muhammadan community, under the leadership of Sir Sayid Ahmad, had held aloof from the Congress. They were working under the auspices of the Patriotic Association in opposition to the National Movement. Our critics regarded the National Congress as

a Hindu Congress and the opposition papers described it as such. We were straining every nerve to secure the co-operation of our Muhammadan fellow-countrymen in this great national work. We sometimes paid the fares of Muhammadan delegates and offered them other facilities".[33] Even Gokhale remarked in one of his speeches that "seventy millions of Muhammadans were more or less hostile to national aspirations"[34]

The anti-Congress policy was clearly laid down by Syed Ahmad in his public speeches, the most notable of them being one at Lakhnau on December 28, 1887, and another at Mirat (Meerut) on March 16, 1888. Referring to them M. Noman remarks that "no Mussalman of note since then joined the Congress except one or two. Even Syed Ahmad Khan's co-religionists who differed from his views on religious, educational and social matters and opposed him violently, followed him in politics and preserved their isolation from the Congress."[35]

There is no doubt that Syed Ahmad succeeded in keeping back the bulk of Muslims from the Congress. They made no secret of the reasons for their action. In 1896, Rahimatullah Sayani, a distinguished Muslim, presided over the Congress session. Haji Muhammad Ismail Khan, a friend of Syed Ahmad, suggested to the Congress President that the Congress should pass a resolution to the effect that the Hindus and Muslims should have equal number of seats in the legislative councils, district-boards, and municipalities. This showed where the shoe pinched. Sayani could not accept Ismail Khan's proposal. Syed Ahmad, however, endorsed it, and wrote in an article that the Muslims could join the Congress only if the Congress agreed to the proposal of Ismail Khan.[36]

As a matter of fact, it is quite evident from a perusal of the contemporary records that almost all the leading Muslim Institutions and personalities joined hands in their

indignation against the Indian National Congress. "Resolutions condemning the Congress were passed by the Musalmans of Allahabad. Lakhnau, Meerut, Lahore, Madras and other places. The Mahomedan Observer, the Victoria Paper, The Muslim Herald, The Rafiq-i-Hind and the Imperial Paper—all spoke with one voice against the Indian National Congress. The Aligarh Institute Gazette, a powerful Muslim organ of Northern India, never missed any opportunity of reprinting all sorts of views opposed to the Congress ideology from other newspapers and magazines. The Central National Muhammadan Association of Bengal, the Muhammadan Literary Society of Calcutta, the Anjuman-i-Islamia of Madras, the Dindigal Anjuman and the Muhammadan Central Association, Punjab, denounced, in the strongest possible terms, Congress aims and activities."[37]

'Syed Ahmad's opposition to the Congress was not confined to verbal protest. He also took practical steps to check its rising popularity by the foundation of the United Indian Patriotic Association and the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental Defence Association, to which reference has been made above.'

It was also not without significance that Syed Ahmad laid the foundation of the Annual Muslim Educational Conference in 1886, only a year after the establishment of the National Congress. The Conference was held each year at different places in India exactly at the time when the Congress held its sessions. Although its main object was the discussion of the general and educational condition of the Indian Musalmans, it became also a forum for the dissemination of Muslim political opinions. By the gradual progress of this annual conference, the Muslims hoped to overspread "the whole of upper India with a network of societies, committees and individuals, all working harmoniously in the great cause, so that a big evil may be dealt with by a strong remedy, and by the vigorous

work of one generation the tide of misfortune may be turned and *Mohamedan Nation* may be set moving on the tide of progress abreast of all the other Nations of India."[38]

Abbas S. Tyabji, Bar-at-Law, rightly diagnosed the symptoms of Muhammadan aloofness and correctly exposed the unreasoning fear of the Muslims when he wrote : "The real reason is that the Mahomedan minority has a fear that it will not be dealt with fairly by the Hindu majority. Now I ask this question : has the Congress pressed for any rights during the last 25 years which would have specially benefited the Hindus at the expense of the Mahomedans ? If it had, my Mahomedan brethren may rest assured that men like the late Mr. Justice Tyabji, Nawab Syed Mahomed and others, would not have kept up their connections with the Congress movement''[38a] R. M. Sayani, President of the Congress in 1896, made an elaborate analysis of the probable causes of Muslim discontent against the Congress, as noted above,[38ab] and proceeded to reply to each of them. The Congress also lost no opportunity to placate the Muslims as far as possible without surrendering their basic principle. An instance is afforded by the third session of the Congress. At this session held in Madras in 1887, a member gave notice of a resolution urging the prohibition of cow-slaughter. The Congress was in great difficulty, as the feeling of the Muhammadans on this question was only too well-known and it was fully realized that the resolution would raise a question of great difficulty and delicacy. The Congress found a solution that was fair to all interests and was accepted by all parties, and which has since been the recognized convention of the Congress. It was decided that if any resolution affecting a particular class or community was objected to by the delegates representing that community even though they were in a minority, it should not be considered by the Congress.

But all this went in vain. Nothing could bring round

Syed Ahmad to the support of the Congress. After his death in 1898 his mantle fell upon Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk who also followed the same policy. This spirit of animosity against the Congress gradually brought in its train a general spirit of opposition to the Hindus.

This spirit was further embittered by other measures, such as the propaganda against the killing of cows, generally, but wrongly, believed to be initiated by Tilak. Far more serious was the unfortunate and protracted controversy over Urdu *vs.* Hindi, originating from a movement, begun by the Hindus in Varanasi as early as 1867, to replace Urdu by Hindi and the Arabic script by Nagari. This movement convinced Syed Ahmad that the Hindus and Muslims could never "join whole-heartedly together and the differences between them would immensely increase in future." Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk even adopted a militant attitude. "Although", he said, "we have not the might of pen, our hands are still strong enough to wield the might of the sword"[38b]

Both the Aligarh Movement and its founder have been severely criticized and condemned by a class of writers, mostly Hindu. They point out that this movement was responsible for bringing about that conflict between the Hindus and Muslims which culminated in the foundation of Pakistan. But it is necessary to look at the movement fairly and squarely from the point of view of the Muslims for whom it was primarily intended. There can be no gainsaying the fact that the Aligarh Movement was to the Muslims what the Renaissance and Nationalist Movement of the 19th century was to the Hindus. It raised the Muslim community from the slough of despondency in which it had sunk after the Mutiny and transformed it from the Medieval into the Modern age. Syed Ahmad who ushered in this movement deserves the highest praise for his love of the Muslim community and the far-sighted vision which he displayed regarding the problem of the

Muslims. As pointed out above, he did for his community something like what Raja Rammohan Roy had done for the Hindus. He tried to introduce English education among the Muslims as he held, like the Raja, that that was the only way of removing the prejudices and superstitions which had accumulated in course of ages and retarded the healthy growth of the Muslims on modern lines. He had also introduced reforms in social customs and religious ideas. For all this he had to engage in a hard fight with the orthodox Muslims, specially the Maulvis, and it must be said to his credit that he fought, sometimes almost single-handed, against enormous odds that at one time almost threatened to ruin him. It is a great tribute to his personality that, although not quite well versed in English, he appreciated its importance for his community. He very rightly held that no true progress was possible for the Muslims until and unless they made up for their slackness in the past and imbibed English education and Western rationalism in very much the same way as the Hindus. We can, therefore, understand why he laid so much stress on the educational propaganda and deliberately avoided politics so far as the Muslims were concerned. When he started his crusade for Western education, the total number of Muslim graduates was only 26 against 1,652 in Hindu community. He was of the opinion that the Muslims could advance in education only with the help of the Government, and so long as they did not make sufficient progress, it would be unnecessarily diverting their energy to join in the political movement, with the additional risk of incurring the displeasure of the Government. This, to a certain extent, also explains his opposition to the Indian National Congress. There were other grounds for his anti-Congress policy. In the first place, he had an innate sense of loyalty to the British, and the terrible consequences of the Mutiny, of which he was an eye-witness, probably warned him that the time

was not ripe for any sort of opposition against the British Government. He also knew the temper of the Muslims and was justly afraid that their opposition to the Government might not be confined to passing of resolutions, as in the Congress, but might stir up the latent spirit of revolution and end in overt acts of rebellion which would again expose the Muslims to the same severe repression as followed the great outbreak of 1857 and the Wahabi Movement. Above all, he held that the minds of the Muslims must be matured by higher education and brought more or less on the same intellectual level as those of the Hindus before the two could fruitfully work together on a common political platform. Lastly, Syed Ahmad could never forget that the Muslims formed only one-fourth of the population of India, and would be a decided and permanent minority in any all-India constitution of a democratic character which was demanded by the Congress. The differences between the two communities were of a fundamental character, as already explained above,[38c] and he naturally shrank from a course which would most likely place the future of the Muslims at the absolute mercy of the dominant Hindu majority, whose past attitude towards them was certainly not such as could inspire unhesitating confidence. He has been severely blamed for placing communal interest above the higher ideal of Indian nationalism preached by the Hindus. It is, however, only fair to remember that the achievement of this nobler ideal offered enhanced power, prestige and material prosperity to the Hindus, while it meant just the opposite to the Muslims, as compared to the existing situation. It is much easier to proclaim and pursue a higher or nobler ideal when it also subserves material interests than to accept and devote oneself to it even at the cost of great sacrifice.

There is hardly any doubt that the net result of Syed Ahmad's policy was to widen the cleavage between

the two great communities in India, but perhaps it would be more correct to say that he was not so much anti-Hindu as pro-Muslim. He might well say, like the great Roman, Brutus, that it was not that he loved the Hindus less but that he loved the Muslims more. The one aim of his life was to promote the Muslim interests, come what may.

C. HINDU-MUSLIM RIOTS.

The differences between the Hindus and the Muslims were undoubtedly accentuated by the policy of 'Divide and Rule' systematically pursued by the British throughout the 19th century. As far back as 1821 a British officer wrote in the Asiatic Journal: "Divide et Impera should be the motto of our administration," and the policy was supported by high British officers.[39] At first the policy was to favour the Hindus at the expense of the Muslims, for, as Lord Ellenborough put it, "that race is fundamentally hostile to us and therefore our true policy is to conciliate the Hindus."[40] It was not till the seventies when the Hindus had developed advanced political ideas and a sense of nationalism that the British scented danger and began to favour the Muslims, now turned docile, at the expense of the Hindus. From about the eighties it became the settled policy of the British to play the Muslims against the Hindus and break the solidarity of the pepole.[41] Since then the British argument against conceding the political demands of the Congress has always been 'that it would be impossible for England to hand over the Indian Muslims to the tender mercies of a hostile numerical majority.

This British policy was undoubtedly productive of great evil, but it would be a mistake to suppose that the Hindu-Muslim cleavage was a creation of the British or even of the Aligarh Movement. The cleavage was

there from the very beginning, as mentioned above ;[41a] the British policy merely exploited it for the safety of the British rule, and the Aligarh Movement widened it in order to serve the Muslim interests. Even before the operation of any of these, Hindu-Muslim tensions sometimes developed into serious clashes between the two communities.

Early in the nineteenth century there was such a violent outbreak at Varanasi (Banaras). In October, 1809, the Hindu mob of the city stormed the great mosque of Aurangzeb. Though well-authenticated details are lacking, it is reported that about fifty mosques were destroyed, the city was given up to pillage and slaughter, and a large number of Muslims were put to death. In 1857 the Muslims of Broach attacked the quarters of the Parsis and killed some of them. Communal riots and tensions during the great outbreak of 1857 have been noted above. [41b] Hindu-Muslim riots with heavy casualties occurred at Bareilly and other localities in U. P. during 1871-2.[42]

A serious riot took place in Bombay in 1851. An article written by a Parsi youth on the Prophet of Arabia gave umbrage to the Muslims. At a meeting held on 7 October, 1851, they proclaimed a *jihad* (holy war) against the Parsis. They overwhelmed the small police force on duty and marched triumphantly to the Parsi quarters of the Bombay town. The Parsis were "belaboured mercilessly by the rioters." "For weeks together that part of Bombay was a scene of pillage and destruction, and the Parsis had to put up with shocking atrocities such as defilement of corpses." Throughout the trouble the Parsi community failed to secure any police protection.[43]

There was a similar riot in Bombay in 1874, of which there are eye witnesses' accounts from two great Indian leaders like Dadabhai Naoroji and Pherozeshah Mehta. In a book written by a Parsi vaccinator there was a reference to the Prophet which was regarded as objecti-

onable by the Muslims. The publication was accordingly suppressed by the Government and the author was made to apologize for any affront he might have inadvertently offered. Nevertheless, there was "a brutal and unwarranted attack on Parsis by a mob of Mohamedans."

They "invaded Parsi places of worship, tore up the prayer-books, extinguished the sacred fires and subjected the fire-temples to various indignities. Parsis were attacked in the streets and in their houses and free fights took place all over the city. Thanks to the weakness and supineness of the police and the Government hooliganism had full play and considerable loss of life and damage to property were caused." The riot continued for several days till the military was called out.

Both Pherozeshah Mehta and Dadabhai, whom no one would accuse of having any special animosity against the Muslims or the British Government, have laid emphasis on the callousness of the police and the indifference of the Government. "The attitude of the Commissioner of Police was particularly hostile and objectionable. Even the Governor advised a Parsi deputation, that waited on him, to make its peace with the Muhammadans and to learn the lesson of defending itself without dependence on the authorities."[44]

In 1877 a series of riots took place between the Hindu and Muslim subjects of the Nawab of Janjira. Communal disturbances grew in volume and frequency, particularly between the years 1885 and 1893. Serious communal riots broke out at Lahore and Karnal (1885), Delhi (1886), where the military had to be requisitioned, Hoshiarpur, Ludhiana, Ambala, Dera Chazi Khan (1889) and Palakod in the Salem District, Madras (1891). The year 1893 was one of the worst and there were grave outbreaks over a large area in Azamgarh Dt. (U. P.), Bombay town (lasted for 6 days) and interior, and Isa Khel (Mianwalli

Dt., Panjab). The Muharram and Dusserah Processions and cow-killing at Baqrid were the causes, and murders, demolition of mosques and temples, and looting of shops were the chief characteristics of these riots. There were also many other riots during the next decade.

The riots in Bihar in 1893-4 and those in Calcutta in 1897 had some special features which later became very prominent. During the early part of 1893-4 considerable activity was shown by the different associations formed in Bihar for the protection of kine, known as 'Gorakshini Sabhas', in collecting subscriptions and in promoting the anti-kine-killing movement. During April and May, 1893, there were several riots occasioned by the forcible rescuing of cattle from Muhammadan butchers, and additional police had to be appointed in seven places in the Gaya District. On the 27th August a very serious riot broke out at Koath in Sahabad District. It began with an attack of the Muhammadan butchers by the Hindus and ended in a general riot, involving some casualties. In the Saran District a drove of cattle, stopped by the Hindus on the high road between Champaran and Chapra on 31 August, were taken to the police station, and it was attacked by a large mob of Hindus armed with *lathis*. The police opened fire, killing two and injuring many.[45]

The Calcutta riots in 1897 had a quite different origin. Maharaja Sir Jatindramohan Tagore obtained by a decree of the court a plot of land at Talla, just outside the northern limit of the city of Calcutta. There was a small hut on the piece of land which the Muhammadans claimed to be a mosque. So when the Tagore's party went to take possession of the land, large number of lower class Muhammadans gathered with a view to resisting the demolition of the hut. Though they were dispersed by the police, a group of them attacked the Calcutta Waterworks pumping station in the neighbourhood. This was

the signal for a number of riots by detached parties of Muhammadans during the night of 30 June and 1 July, in course of which the police opened fire on several occasions. Total casualties included 11 killed and about 20 wounded among the rioters, and 34 among the police. Eighty-seven of the rioters were arrested of whom eighty-one were convicted.[46]

These communal riots may be justly regarded as an outward manifestation of that communal spirit which grew in intensity throughout the nineteenth century and at last drove the Hindus and Muslims into two opposite camps in politics. The ground was prepared by the frankly communal outlook of the Muslims typified by the Wahabi Movement and the Aligarh Movement. The situation was rendered worse by the policy of Divide and Rule adopted by the British Government with the definite object of playing one community against the other. The spectre of communalism which haunted Indian politics even at the close of the nineteenth century was destined to grow in size and volume as years rolled by. The cloud that was no bigger than a man's hand in 1900 soon overcast the whole sky and brought rain, thunder and storm which drenched the whole country with blood and tears in less than half a century.

APPENDIX

HISTORY OF THE HISTORY OF FREEDOM MOVEMENT IN INDIA

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Ever since the achievement of independence on 15th August, 1947, the idea possessed me that steps should be taken for compiling a history of India's struggle for freedom. I accordingly moved a Resolution to that effect in the Jaipur Session of the Indian Historical Records Commission held in February, 1948. Further, in order to draw public attention to the project I explained my views and suggested a scheme in an article entitled 'History of India's Struggle'. It was published in the *New Democrat*, a weekly journal of the Institute of Political Science, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, in its issue of 7 May, 1948. I observed in this article that the task of writing a proper history of the struggle "is so great that it is not possible for any private individual to undertake it. It is the duty of the State to launch a scheme which would ensure the preservation and full utilization of all the materials."

A copy of my article was sent to the Prime Minister. His Secretary advised me to contact the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. I accordingly wrote to the Secretary of that Ministry on 15th June, 1948, requesting him to go through my article and take some steps to give practical effect to the scheme outlined by me. I did not receive any reply to this letter. I then took advantage of my old acquaintance with Dr. Rajendra Prasad and wrote a letter to him. In his fairly long reply, dated Camp Pilani, Jaipur, August 26, 1948, he wholeheartedly approved my proposal. He wrote : "I agree with you that it is necessary to

have a history of the Indian struggle written by a competent body.........I shall consider how best to push forward the scheme. If you have any scheme ready kindly send it to me." Needless to say, I immediately sent my scheme to him.

On 4 December, 1948, I met Shri N. B. Maiti, a Minister of West Bengal, in a private party and urged upon him the importance of publishing an authentic history of the national movement in Bengal. He was very enthusiastic about it and asked me to submit a concrete proposal to the Minister of Education. I accordingly wrote to the latter, enclosing a detailed scheme which involved an expenditure of Rs. 30,000 in two years. I assured him that even if he sanctioned only half this amount I would collect the balance from private sources. The Hon'ble Minister of Education (who occupies the same post even today) had not even the courtesy to acknowledge receipt of this letter. I had sent a copy of it to Shri Maiti, and also personally spoke to him again, but nothing came out of my efforts.

As mentioned above, I moved in the Jaipur session of the I. H. R. C. (Indian Historical Records Commission), held in February, 1948, "that an attempt be made to compile a list of important records, both published and unpublished, bearing upon the national struggle for freedom." The following extract from the official proceedings of the I. H. R. C. (p. 144) would convey an idea of what followed.

"Dr. R. C. Majumdar said that India has attained her independence but the history of the national struggle that culminated in independence has yet to be written. Unless the materials for such a history are now collected some of them are likely to be lost for ever. He did not like to put a chronological limit to the subject that might be done later but some of the prominent leaders of the independence movement whether violent or non-violent were still in the land of living and their correspondence and other relevant papers could yet be saved. This will demand

organized effort on the part of the Indian scholars and the Government of the country. The foremost leader of the movement, Dr. Majumdar observed, was Mahatma Gandhi and it was essential that all his papers should be placed in the custody of the National Archives as has been done in the U. S. A. with respect to Lincoln and Roosevelt Papers. The National Archives of Washington has already stolen a march over India. It has already acquired photographic copies of Mahatmaji's writings and a record of his voice. He was aware of the proposal to organise Memorial Museum. Other belongings of Mahatmaji might go to that Museum but his writings and other papers which form an important source of the history of our national struggle must come to the National Archives. Apart from other reasons the papers are likely to be better looked after in the National Archives than elsewhere.

"The Secretary pointed out the necessity of specifying the extent of financial assistance that the enterprise would require so that the Government of India might consider the resolution in all its aspects.

"A lively discussion on the subject followed and following resolutions were passed :-

Resolution X-This Committee recommends that an attempt be made to compile a list of important records, both published and unpublished, bearing upon the national struggle for freedom.

Resolution XI-That the Government of India be moved to make an initial grant of Rs. 25,000 to be distributed among the Regional Survey Committees for collection of materials relating to the proposed compilation of an authoritative history of Indian national struggle.

Resolution XII-That the Government of India and the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Committee be requested to transfer all the original writings of Mahatma Gandhi and records relating to him to the custody of the National

Archives of India for preservation."

It was reported in the next session of I. H. R. C. held at Delhi in December, 1948, that with regard to Resolutions X and XI above, 'Reply from the Government of India is awaited.' As regards Resolution XII the Government of India had moved the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Committee, New Delhi, and its reply was awaited.

The inertia of the Ministry of Education would have probably continued for long, but for the intervention of Dr. Rajendra Prasad. When in August, 1949, I received an intimation that the Government have decided to appoint a small Committee to collect material for the preparation of a history of the freedom movement, I had a shrewd suspicion that the hand of Rajendra Prasad was behind it. For although I heard nothing from him after I had sent him my scheme in reply to his letter dated 26 August, 1948, referred to above, I hoped, from the tenor of his letter, that he would exert his influence in the matter. Fortunately, we have now positive evidence to show that my conjecture was right and that it was Dr. Rajendra Prasad who set the ball rolling. This is plainly admitted in the opening paragraph of the Government note placed before the I. H. R. C. Session at Nagpur in December, 1950. It reads as follows :-

"NOTE ON THE PROGRESS MADE IN THE COMPILATION OF THE HISTORY OF FREEDOM MOVEMENT IN INDIA.

Genesis.

The scheme for writing an authentic and comprehensive history of the different phases of the struggle which culminated in the freedom of India in 1947, was originally recommended by the Indian Historical Records Commission at its Jaipur Session in 1948 ; and when the Hon'ble Dr. Rajendra Prasad invited the attention of the Government

of India to the urgency of this work, the Ministry of Education was entrusted with the planning and execution of the project." (Proceedings, p. 95)

The public would now be in a position to judge whether the credit for launching the scheme belongs to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, as stated by Janab Humayun Kabir,[1] or to Dr. Rajendra Prasad. I have treated this topic at some length in order to counteract the official propaganda of Janab Kabir and Dr. Tara Chand to foist the credit of planning the history of freedom movement in India upon their late master. Both of them were intimately associated with the Education Ministry and should have been in possession of all the relevant facts, and at least seen the note quoted above.

In any case it is a matter of great gratification to me that I have got an opportunity to place on record that the real credit for initiating the scheme for writing a history of the freedom movement belongs to Dr. Rajendra Prasad. He has already won a place in the history of modern India by his life-long devotion to the cause of India's freedom. But posterity should remember with gratitude that he also initiated two other important national schemes —one for writing a comprehensive history of India (in twenty volumes), and the other for compiling an authentic history of the freedom movement in India—both of which may possibly yield fruitful results at no distant date, though perhaps not through the agencies visualized by him.

We may now recount the activities of the Ministry of Education, after it was entrusted with the task of writing the history at the instance of Dr. Rajendra Prasad. "To implement the decision of the Government of India", so runs the Government note, an expert Committee of seven members was appointed with Dr. Tara Chand as Chairman.

"The Committee held its first meeting on 5th January, 1950, and after a thorough examination of the issues involved,

made several recommendations, of which the following are the most outstanding :—

(a) That the projected history should be confined to the period 1870 A.D. to 15th August, 1947, and that the movements prior to 1870 may be treated in an introductory chapter ;

(b) That the material should be collected from original and authentic sources, both official and non-official, from within the Union as well as from abroad ;

(c) That a Central Organization with regional offices should be established so that all material from possible sources may be explored and collated."[2]

The Ministry of Education, however, felt unable to accept these recommendations. They pointed out in detail the stupendous character of the undertaking and then added : "Moreover, on account of the present financial stringency, it is not possible for Government to find any substantial amount of money for accomplishment of this task. It is, therefore, essential that this work should progress through the voluntary efforts of scholars and learned societies."[3]

The Ministry might have good reasons for their decision. But certainly the note, from which the above is quoted, does not substantiate Janab Humayun Kabir's remark that the recommendation of the I. H. R. C. made at Jaipur session in February, 1948 "found an *immediate* response from the late Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, who directed that steps should *forthwith* be taken to give effect to it."[4] The observation of Janab Kabir is further discredited by the events that followed.

The reluctance of the Government of India to undertake the work had its repercussions on the Expert Committee. In its meeting held on 18 September, 1951, the Chairman, Dr. Tara Chand, suggested that instead of the Ministry of Education undertaking the entire work itself, it might be entrusted to an academic body like the Indian History

Congress or a University. The Committee came to the conclusion that the Delhi University would be the most suitable agency for undertaking the project. I could not attend the meeting and only two historians were present (Dr. Tara Chand and Dr. Bisheshwar Prasad). I heard later many rumours about the real motive lying behind the decision. However, for reasons I do not know, no effect was given to this recommendation, but I came to learn later (though not from official source) that there was a prolonged negotiation between the Ministry of Education and the University of Delhi. In any case, not only was the project finally abandoned, but the Ministry of Education suddenly showed a great vigour and enthusiasm more than a year after the recommendation was made by the Experts Committee on 18 September, 1951. What transpired in the meantime, and whether the hand of Rajendra Prasad was again at work, I cannot say.

On 30 December, 1952, the Ministry of Education set up a Board of Editors for the compilation of the History of Freedom Movement in India, consisting of the following 9 members :

(1). Dr. Syed Mahmud, M. P.,Chairman.

(2). Acharya Narendra Deva, M. P., Vice-Chancellor, Banaras Hindu University.

(3). Dr. S. N. Sen, Vice-Chancellor, Delhi University.

(4). Shri N. V. Potdar, Chairman, Deccan Research Society.

(5). Prof. M. Habib, Aligarh Muslim University.

(6). Dr. R. C. Majumdar, Banaras Hindu University.

(7). Prof. Nilakanta Sastri, Madras University.

(8). Shri Balwant Singh Mehta.

(9). Shri S. M. Ghose, M. P., Secretary.

In its meeting on 26 April, 1953, the Board resolved to appoint a Director to organize the work of sifting and collecting materials and preparing the draft of the history,

and I was appointed to the post. Some idea of the difficulty which I had to face in doing my work has been referred to in the Preface of my book, *The Sepoy Mutiny and the Revolt of 1857*, published in 1957.

The Executive powers of the Board were theoretically vested in the hands of a small Committee consisting of the Chairman, Secretary and a senior official of the Government of India—none of whom had a knowledge of history—and were practically exercised by the Secretary. I was given the assistance of a number of research workers, some of whom were appointed even without my knowledge. But I would rather draw a veil over these personal matters, as well as the details of the work I did during a period of two years and a half, before the Board was dissolved at the end of 1955. But I am definitely of opinion that the Board was a hindrance rather than help, and the work would have been much better done by a small body of two or three competent historians. Local Committees were set up in different States for collecting material, and the publications of many of these Committees in recent times would give an idea of the work done by them.

According to the programme outlined by the Government, the Board was to complete its work within a period of three years ; the first two years to be used for collecting and sifting materials and preparing drafts on different phases of the struggle, and the third year to be used for preparing the final text for publication.

I prepared the first rough draft of Volume I before the end of 1954, and it was circulated to all the members of the Board. A meeting of the Board was held at Ahmadabad on 31 December, 1954, and 1st and 2nd January, 1955, the principal item on the agenda being "discussion on the draft collated account of Vol. I". After a prolonged discussion extending over three days "the Board generally approved its lay-out", but "it also endorsed the suggestion of K. A. Nilakanta Sastri that each member should send

to the Director a stencilled copy of the draft with marginal notes embodying his views in regard to its final revision." So far as I can recollect, no member cared to do this.

It was also decided at the meeting "that the draft (chapters) should be kept strictly confidential at this stage as their circulation might lead to undesirable and unnecessary controversy." Unfortunately, this decision was not strictly implemented. The first inkling of this I got from the Hon'ble Minister Abul Kalam Azad. He told me that my draft appeared to him to be very satisfactory, but he had received complaints that the role of Bengal had been unduly exaggerated. He added that as both of us hailed from Bengal, such comments might do a great deal of mischief.

It was not long before I got evidence of such mischief being afoot. A meeting of the Board of Editors was held on the 28th March, 1955, to discuss a note written by Dr. Tara Chand on the preparation of the history of Freedom Movement in India. It was circulated beforehand, and was an elaborate scheme in eleven typed foolscap pages. It was marked by an entirely new approach to the subject, beginning from the settlement of different primitive races (like Negroids) and evolution of cultures 'from palaeolithic to modern Western'. Some idea of his scheme may be formed from his *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. I., already published.

Janab Humayun Kabir, Secretary, Ministry of Education, and Dr. Tara Chand, a former Secretary, attended the meeting by special invitation. Dr. Tara Chand observed, while speaking about his scheme in the meeting, that "the present draft Volume I (i. e. the one prepared by me and generally approved) could not be regarded as a historical text at all." The following extracts from the official minutes of the meeting would explain my views on the subject :

"The note on the preparation of the History of

Freedom Movement in India prepared by Dr. Tara Chand which was already circulated to the members and special invitees was taken up for discussion. Dr. R. C. Majumdar, Director, expressed his views thereon as follows :—

"The History of the Ereedom Movement in India was a general term and it stood circumscribed in two respects, namely, (i) Freedom denotes freedom from the British yoke and (ii) it referred to the political freedom only.

"Dr. R. C. Majumdar quoted two letters, one from the Govt. of India and the other written by the Member Secretary of the Board to substantiate his views. The Govt. of India's letter of 1950 envisaged that the History should cover the period from 1870 to 1947 (15th August). The Secretary's letter in 1953 traced the beginning back to 1857. He further said that in the meeting of the Board of Editors held in January, 1953, a draft outline of the History had been unanimously approved and a detailed plan with division into chapters was circulated in 1954. The draft prepared on this basis was also generally approved at the Ahmadabad meeting of the Board in January, 1955. He, therefore, felt that as a practical measure the plan should be regarded as final and not open for fresh discussion. He was of opinion that the plan set forth in Dr. Tara Chand's note contained some points which were not strictly relevant. Is was, according to him, more or less a general review of political, cultural and social history of India. There were, however, certain other matters in the note which were quite relevant, but the approach was rather different. Dr. R. C. Majumdar emphasized that in the projected History the movement for political freedom should be treated as the central theme and though other factors contributing to it should be dealr therein, they should be treated as merely ancillary to it."

Dr. Tara Chand was assured by some members that the approach made in the note was in accord with the plan

of the work of the Board of Editors. A resolution was also adopted to the effect "that the Board is generally in agreement with his approach."

A deep mystery hangs over the whole episode. Why at this late stage, after the lay-out of the different chapters was settled long ago and the draft of Vol. I was generally approved by the Board, an entirely different plan should have been discussed in its full meeting,—who initiated this idea and invited Dr. Tara Chand to submit a scheme,—all these are unknown to me. It is also very strange that a scheme, so entirely different in approach, should be regarded by the Board as being in accord with its plan, and yet no directive was issued to modify the draft volume in accord with it, and the Board proceeded with the work without any further consideration of Dr. Tara Chand's note. No less strange is the following resolution passed at the same meeting of the Board :

"That the following points should be placed before the Union Education Minister for a final decision :

1. Whether the Board of Editors is expected to present the History of the Freedom Movement to the Ministry of Education in its final form, ready for publication, or whether the Ministry contemplates appointing one or more persons to write the history in its final form on the basis of the materials collected and collated by the Board.

2. In case the Board is asked to prepare the history in its final form the Board submits the following revised time table for the completion of the different volumes of the history and the time-limit previously fixed by the Ministry, together with Budgetary provisions, should be amended accordingly :—

Volume I. 31st March, 1956.
Volume II. 31st March, 1957.
Volume III. 31st March, 1958.

3. In case the Board is asked merely to collect and collate materials for the three volumes the work is expected to be completed by 31st March, 1957."

The resolution clearly shows that some influence was already at work to undo all that I had hitherto done, and make a new arrangement for writing the history. For already, only about a week before, in reply to a question in the Parliament on 22 March, 1955, Dr. K. L. Shrimali, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Education, stated: "A draft collated account of the first phase of the History covering the period up to the year 1884 has been prepared and the preparation of draft account of the second phase covering the period 1885 to 1919 is in hand." Again, in reply to Gopala Reddy who enquired: "May I know Sir, when the other chapters of the Freedom Movement will be completed," Dr. Shrimali said: "It is expected that we shall be able to prepare the whole report by the end of 1956". Again there was a supplementary by Dr. Raghubir Singh: "May I know, Sir, when the first volume would be finalized for publication?" Dr. K. L. Shrimali said: "I have already said that this is practically ready and it is waiting for revision only." Later on Shrimali said that it may have to be revised but not "completely rewritten."[5] The resolution adopted at the Board's meeting on the 28th March is hardly compatible with the above official statements made in the Parliament. But the effect of the resolution could be easily seen in a complete change in the attitude of the Government. The time-schedule recommended in the second part of the resolution, quoted above, was unceremoniously rejected, and even though the reply of the Parliamentary Secretary clearly indicated an extension of the Board's life at least up to the end of 1956, the Government proved adamant in their decision to dissolve the Board of Editors by the end of 1955. The rest of the story need not be told in detail. The Board

was actually dissolved with effect from January 1, 1956, though I had to cut off my connection with it in October, on account of some correspondence that passed between me and the Secretary.

For more than a year after the dissolution of the Board the Government did not take any step for compiling the history of the Freedom Movement in India. Subsequently Dr. Tara Chand was entrusted with the work. The first volume of his history was published on 26 January, 1961. In his pra ace Dr. Tara Chand has not made even a casual reference to the Board and its work. He simply states that the idea of writing a history of the freedom movement emanated from Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and he asked Dr. Tara Chand to taken up the work.[6] It would appear from what has been said above that nothing can be further from truth than the first part of this sentence, and the second part is a remarkable illustration of *suppressio veri*. Janab Humayun Kabir refers to the Board in his Foreword, but conveys the idea that its activities were confined to mere collection of materials,[7] which is clearly contradicted, among others, by the statement of the Parliamentary Secretary, quote above. As already mentioned above,[8] the role attributed to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in the Foreword is inaccurate and misleading. The reasons assigned by Janab Humayun Kabir for the dissolution of the Board and appointment of Dr. Tara Chand are very curious, to say the least of it. He observes :

"The Board rendered very useful service but it soon became clear that an ad hoc body set up on a temporary basis could not complete the work of collecting the necessary material, still less prepare a unified history by sifting and interpreting the data. It included both academic historians and active politicians and the differences in their approach were seen even at the stage of collection of data. These differences became still more marked when it came to

interpreting the material that had already been collected. It was therefore decided to transfer the work of further collection to the National Archives and of interpretation and narration to one single scholar of distinction. Accordingly, Dr. Tare Chand who had been Chairman of the Planning Committee at an earlier stage and had a special competence for the task was entrusted with the work of sifting the material and preparing a unified history of the Indian freedom movement."[9]

I have been connected with the Board from its very inception almost up to the end. I do not know of any serious difference among the members of the Board in regard to the collection of material or interpretation of material that had already been collected, and this is proved by the general approval of the draft of Vol. I.[10] So far as I know, the Government never even remotely alluded to any such ground for dissolving the Board. It is a great pity that almost every statement made in the Foreword and the Preface regarding the history of preparing the History of Freedom Movement in India should be either half-truths or untruths, though the writers of both should have had a full knowledge of all the facts, and at least had ample opportunity of knowing them.

FOOTNOTES

The following abbreviations have been used in the footnotes :—

Chaudhuri	S. B. Chaudhuri, *Civil Rebellion in the Indian Mutinies.*
HCIP	*History and Culture of the Indian People*, edited by R. C. Majumdar, and published by the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay.
Holmes	T. R. E. Holmes, *A History of the Indian Mutiny and of the Disturbances which accompanied it among the Civil Population.*
Kaye	J. W. Kaye, *A History of the Sepoy War in India*, 3 Vols.
Malleson	G. B. Malleson, *Htstory of the Indian Mutiny*, 3 Vols.
Metcalfe	C. T. Metcalfe, *Two Native Narratives of the Mutiny in Delhi* (Westminster, 1898).
Ms. L.	Kaye's Mutiny Papers preserved in the India Office Library (now Commonwealth Relations Office), London.
Nation	Surendra Nath Banerjea, *A Nation in Making.*
PIHRC	Proceedings of the Indian Historical Records Commission.
SAK	Sayyid Ahmed Khan, *Rissalah Asbab-e-Bhagawat-i-Hind.* 1858. English Translation by Captain W. N. Lees under the title *An Essay on the Causes of the Indian Revolt* (Calcutta, 1860).
Sen	Surendra Nath Sen, *Eighteen Fifty-seven* (published by the Government of India, May, 1957).
SM	R. C. Majumdar, *The Sepoy Mutiny and the Revolt of 1857* (April, 1957).
TB	*Trial of Muhammad Bahadur Shah* (Selections from the Records of the Government of the Punjab, 1870).

BOOK I, CHAPTER I.

1. Cf. the letter of Peshwa Balaji Baji Rao to Governor Drake of Calcutta, proposing alliance against the Nawab of Bengal (Scrafton, L.,

Reflections on the government of Indostan p. 82), and the letter dated 12 May, 1757, from the Marathas to Clive offering their assistance to obtain justice from the Nawab (Hill, *Bengal in 1756-7*, Vol. I, p. cxc).

2. O'Malley, L. S. S. (Ed.), *Modern India and the West*, p. 44.
3. India Office Record, O. C. 4258 (quoted in P. E. Roberts, *History of British India*, 2nd edition, p. 43).
4. Bodleian Library, Rawlinson Manuscripts, A. 303 (quoted in Roberts, op. cit., p. 44).
5. Bolt, W., *Considerations on Indian Affairs*, Vol. III, pp. 240-1, Appendix, pp. 15-9.
6. Seeley, *Expansion of England*, p. 209.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid, 202-3.
9. For details, cf. Mill, James, *History of British India*, Book IV, Chapter VI.
10. Ibid, Vol. III, p. 269.
11. Ibid, 272.
12. Trotter, L. J., *History of the British Empire in India*, p. 279.

BOOK I, CHAPTER II.

1. *History of Bengal*, Vol. II (Dacca University), Ed. J. N. 'a kar, p. 498.

1a. W. Adam, *Report on Vernacular Education in Bengal and Bihar. The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 12 Augtst, 1869.

2. *Rommohun Roy—Centenary Publicity Booklet*—No. 1, Edited by Amal Home, p. 80.
3. B. N. Banerji, *Sambadpatre Sekaler Katha* (in Bengali), III. 217.
4. J. C. Bagal, *Bharatvarsher Svadhinata* (in Bengali), pp. 174-6.
5. Tara Chand, *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, p. 137.
6. For a datailed discussion of the Hindu-Muslim relations, cf. *HCIP*, VI. 615-636. For the reference to Bengali literature, cf. ibid, 631-635.
7. *The Book* of *Duarte Barbosa*, Tranlsated by M. L. Dames, II. 148.
8. *Young India*, pp. 73-5.
9. *A. B. Patrika*, 12 August, 1869, quoted by Bagal, op. cit., p. 176.
10. Sachau, *Alberuni's India*, I. 17, 19.
11. The above account is based on Adam's *Report on Vernacular Education in Bengal and Bihar*.

12. *History of Bengal*, II. 497.
13. J. N. Sarkar, *The Fall of the Mughal Empire*, pp. 86-8.
14. Ibid, 88-9.
15. O' Malley, L. S., *Modern India and the West*, pp. 54-55.
16. Ibid, 25-6.
17. Ibid, 35.
18. P. E. Roberts, *History of British India* (Second Edition) pp. 86, 88
19. C. R. Wilson, *The Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, I. 217.

BOOK I, CHAPTER III.

1. Cf. Memorial to the Supreme Court against the Press Ordinances (*Works of Ram Mohan Roy*, Panini Press, p. 439.
2. Seeley, *Expansion of England*, p. 206.
3. "Yet it is not right to say that the Muslim rule in India was a foreign rule" (*Young India*, pp. 73-5).
4. "It is only under British rule that India for the first time in her history has begun to feel that she has been conquered" (*Indian Struggle, 1920-34*, p.9).
5. S. C. Hill, *Bengal in 1756-7*, p. xxiii.

5a. K. K. Datta, *Studies in the History of the Bengal Subah, 1740-70 A. D.* p. 103.

5b. N. N. Ghosh, *Memoirs of Maharaja Nabakissen Bahadur*, pp. 10, 14.

6. *Works of Ram Mohan Roy*, pp. 445-6.
7. Ibid, 874.
8. Kishorichand Mitra, *Memoirs of Dwarakanath Tagore*, p. 60.
9. Clive's evidence before the Parliamentary Commitee, quoted in B. D. Basu, *Rise of the Christian Power in India*, p. 96.
10. *Works of Ram Mohan Roy*, p. 224. Many regard this autobiographica sketch as spurious.
11. *Rammohun Roy—Centenary Publicity Booklet*, No.1, p. 33.
12. The *India Gazette* of July 4,1831. Quoted in B. Majumdar, *History of Political Thought*, pp. 186-7.
13. The account is based on J. N. Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Vol. II, Chapter XXV.
14. Vansittart, H., *Narratives of the Transactions in Bengal*, I. 51.
15. This account is based on Vansittart, op. cit.
16. Ibid, I. 48-9.

17. See above, p. 53.
18. Vansittart, op., cit., 156-7.
19. Ibid, 33.
20. Long, Rev. J., *Selections from the Unpublished Records of the Government of Bengal*, No. 537; also cf. Nos. 499, 500, 539, 481, 584.
21. Ibid, No. 537. *Birbhum DG*, 15-6.
22. Foreign Dept. Secret Proceedings, 1772, pp. 281-2. Vansittart's Minute, dated 31st July, 1762.
23. *Birbhum DG*, 15-6. *Purnea DG*, 41-6.
24. *Birbhum DG*, 15-6 Broome, *History of the Bengel Army*, pp. 181, 192.
25. Ibid. Long's *Selections*, Nos. 496-7.
26. *Burdwan DG*, 32.
27. Long's *Selections*, No. 558
28. Introduction to *The Fifth Report of 1812*, edited by Rev.W. K. Firminger, pp. 139-40.
29. Long's *Selections*, No. 537.
30. *Purnea DG*, 45-6.
31. This account is based on the following works: Stephen, Sir J. F., *Nuncomar and Impey*, Vol. II, Ch. XVII, pp. 273-88. Vansittart, op. cit., III. 347-54, 417-18. N. N. Ghosh, op. cit., p. 17, Chapter VI, pp. 103 ff.
32. Stephen, op. cit., II. 273-88.
33. The account is based on E. Thornton, *History of the British Empire in India*, III. 93 ff.
34. Ibid, 115.
35. Ibid.
36. In support of this it may be stated that the British authorities had decided to suspend him, and changed their views only after the war had actually broken out.
37. Thornton, op. cit., IV, 119.
38. Ibid. 124-5.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid, 401.
41. Ibid, 398.
42. Ibid, 395.
43. For the story, cf. ibid, 427.
44. Ibid, 429.
45. Ibid, 482.
46. Ibid, 441.
47. Ibid, 500.

BOOK I, CHAPTER IV.

1. See above, pp. 15-16.
2. *A History of the Sikhs* (1904), p. 177 f. n.
3. See pp. 74-5.
4. Thornton, E., *History of the British Empire in India*, II. 296 ff.
5. Ibid, 308.
6. Forrest, G. W., *Selections from the Letters, Despatches, and Other State Papers preserved in The Foreign Department of The Government of India, 1772-85*, Vol. I, p. lxv.
7. Ibid, lxiv.
8. The account is primarily based on Forrest, op. cit., pp. lxiii ff.
9. According to Thornton (op. cit., II. 299), if Chait Singh's men, after rescuing him, "proceeded to the Governor-General's quarters, he, and every Englishman with him, must have fallen an easy prey".
10. Forrest, op. cit. III. 797.
11. Ibid, 803.
12. *Mirzapur DG*, 238.
13. Forrest, op. cit., III. 1003-6. This letter gives a very detailed account of the spirit of insurrection extending over a large area. It is largely based on Col. Hannay's report.
14. Ibid, 1005.
15. Ibid.
16. Cf. his letter to David Anderson, dated 12 December. 1781 (Forrest, op. cit., III. 828-9).
17. Thornton, op. cit., II. 193.
18. P. Basu, *Oudh and the Easi India Company*, Ch. VIII.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.

20a. *Wellesley Despatches*, I. 429-32.

21. Foreign Department, Secret & Separate Consultations, 25 February, 1799, No. 2.
22. Do, 18 February, 1799.
23. Do, 25 February.

23a. S. B. Chaudhuri, *Civil Disturbances during the British Rule in India (1765-1857)*, p. 76.

24. Mill and Wilson, *History of British India*, VI. 135-6.

25. *Modern Review*, September, 1953, p. 206; *Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. 55, pp. 137 ff.
26. Foreign and Political Consultations, 4 February, 1799, No. 38.
27. Davis. S., *Wazir Ali or the Massacre at Banaras.*
28. *Wellesley Despatches* I. 432.

BOOK I, CHAPTER V.

1. Cf. *HCIP.*, Vol. IX, Chapter XIII.
2. S. B. Chaudhuri, *Civil Disiurbances During the British Rule in India* (1765-1857), p. 42.
3. *HCIP.*, IX. 371-2.
4. *Advanced History of India* by R. C. Majumdar and others, 773. Holmes, 39.
5. *Seir Mutaqherin* Translated by N. Raymond, Vol. III, pp. 190 ff.
6. *SAK.*, 10 ff.
7. Ibid, 43.
8. Ibid, 37.
9. Ibid, 42.
10. Ibid, 43.
11. Ibid, 29.
12. Kaye, I. 24.
13. Ibid. 211-2.
14. Holmes, 49.
15. Sen, 21-22.
16. Ibid, 1.
17. Chaudhuri, p. 2.
18. I am indebted to Dr. S. B. Chaudhuri for this reference.
19. Cf. Book IV, Chapter III.
20. Sen, 18.
21. Ibid, 19.
22. Ibid.
23. Holmes, 57.
24. Ibid.

BOOK I, CHAPTER VI.

1. The facts stated in this and the remaining sections of this chapter, as well as the passages quoted, unless otherwise stated, are taken from *Civil Disturbances During the British Rule in India*, by S. B. Chaudhuri.
2. Cf. R. M. Lahiri, *Annexation of Assam*. Calcutta, 1954.
3. Mill, VII, 12 ff., 124 ff.
4. Ibid. 127-32.
5. Ibid, IX-X.

5a. (Wrongly printed on p. 130 as 5). See pp. 66 ff.

6. For a detailed account of the Sanyasi rebellion, cf. the following :
   1 J. M. Ghosh, *Sanyasi and Fakir Raiders in Bengal* (Calcutta, 1930).
   2 Long, *Selections from Unpublished Records of the Government*.
   3 Hunter—*Annals of Rural Bengal*.
   4 Foreign Department, Secret Proceedings, 1773.
   5 Gleig—*Memoirs of Warren Hastings*.
   6 *PIHRC*, XXXI, 148
7. Broughton—*Letters from Maratha Camp*, p. 129.
8. For Faraidi and Wahabi Movements, cf. *HCIP*, IX, 883 ff.; also
   1 S. B. Chaudhuri, op, cit., 50-1, 95-7, 112.
   2 Hunter, *Indian Mussalmans*.
   3 Titus, *Indian Islam*.
   4 *Encyclopaedia of Islam*.
9. A. C. Banerjee, *The Eastern Frontier of British India*, p. 199.
10. Kalikinkar Datta, *The Santal Insurrection of 1855-7*, pp. 5 ff.
11. Ibid, 10.
12. S. B. Chaudhuri, op. cit., 115.
13. Ibid.

BOOK I, CHAPTER VII.

1. The author of this book has dealt with this subject in detail in his *Sepoy Mutiny and the Revolt of 1857* (referred to hereafter as SM.) and *HCIP*, Vol. IX Book I, Part II. Only a brief sketch is given here.
2. For an account of the mutinous sepoys at Delhi, with full references cf. *HCIP*., IX. 504-17 ; *SM*, Book III, Ch. I.

3. Metcalfe, 83 (see f. n., 5).
4. *SM*, 120-24; *PIHRC*, XXXIII. Part II, p. 115.
5. Jiwanlal Munshi and Mainuddin were in Delhi during the siege of 1857, and wrote accounts of what they saw and heard during these eventful months. Their accounts, originally written in Persian, were translated into English by C. T. Metcalfe, and published under the title *Two Native Narratives of the Mutiny in Delhi*.
Jiwanlal Munshi was an officer attached to the household of Bahadur Shah. A writer by caste and profession, he recorded, in the form of a diary, each day's events as they happened. He employed some men to secure information from all quarters. He was undoubtedly ro-British, and may have acted as their spy or secret agent. But that does not take away from the authentic character of the news recorded (and probably supplied to the British) by him. His profession required the supply of accurate information, and Jiwanlal had ample means to secure it (see fn. 3 above). Many of his important statements have been corroborated by independent evidence. Mr. S. A. A. Rizvi hos argued that no value should be attachen to the account of Jiwanlal as he was a British spy (*Freedom Struggle in UP*, I. xix). The profession of a spy is no doubt an ignoble one, but that does not take away the value of information supplied by him, so far at least as the facts, not views, are concerned.
Mainuddin Hasan Khan was a Police Officer in Delhi before the Mutiny, and, though not disloyal to the English, transferred his service to Bahadur Shah when he was declared King. In view of his official position he must have possessed an intimate knowledge of the state of affairs in Delhi.
6. Metcalfe, 85.
7. Ibid, 86.
8. Ibid 92-3.
9. Ibid, 101-2.
10. Ibid, 121.
11. Ibid, 166.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid, 200.
14. Ibid, 228.
15. *TB*, p. 8.
16. Ibid, 9.
17. India Office Manuscripts, London, Vol. 725, pp. 25-147; for the quotations, cf. 66, 85.
18. Metcalfe, 87.
19. *TB*, 26 ff.
20. See fn., 5 above.

21. Metcalfe, 65.
22. Ibid, 92.
23. Ibid, 105.
24. Ibid, 93.
25. Sen, 91.
26. The full text of Tantia's statement is given in Malleson, III. 514 ff., in English translation. The statement was recorded in Camp Mushairi on April 10, in the presence of Major Meade, Commanding Field Force. Asked by Meade Tantia said : "I have, of my own free will, caused this statement to be written ; and no one has forced me to do so, or held out hope or promise of any sort to induce me to do so." Recently the authenticity of the statement has been challenged on grounds which are merely a string of queries containing vague insinuations to which little value attaches so long as clear charge with evidence to support them are not forthcoming (*Freedom Struggle in Uttar Pradesh*, I. xvii).

    For a short summary of Tantia's statement, cf *SM* pp. 158-63, 89-90. Tantia's statement about the help rendered by Nana to Hillersden, as quoted in the text, is fully supported by Nana himself in his petition which will be referred to later.
27. *SM*, p. 13.
27a. Thompson, E., *The Other Side of the Medal*, p. 30
28. Holmes, 229-236.
29. This is based on the account of Mowbray Thomson, one of these four survivors.
30. Kaye, II. 670 ; *SM*. 133-4 ; 269, f.n., 20.
31. See p. 29.
32. Official Narrative. See next footnote.
33. The following summary is based upon an official publication entitled *Narratives of Events Attending the Outbreak of Disturbances*. It was compiled by the various District Officers and the Divisional Commissioners in the North-Western Provinces and contains almost a day to day account of the incidents that happened under the very eyes of the officials concerned, or of which they got information from men who witnessed them. Cf. also Kaye, Holmes, and Malleson.
34. Chaudhuri, 76-7.
35. Ibid, 77-8.
36. *History of the Siege of Delhi*, by an officer who served there (Edinburgh, 1861).
37. Sen. 347-8.
38. Durgadas Bandyopadhyaya, *Bidrohe Bangali* (in Bengali).
39. Chaudhuri, 115.
40. Ibid, 209-10.

41. For a full account, cf. *Bengal Past and Present* LXXVI, pp. 52-4. Also cf. *SM*, 240.
42. Holmes, 523, f. n., 1.
43. Ibid, 297.
44. Holmes has elaborately discussed the question in Appendix S, pp. 624 ff.
45. Sen, 215.
46. Holmes, 587 ; Chaudhuri, 119-20, 130.
47. For the names of a few Talukdars who were at first loyal to the British, but later turned against them, cf. Chaudhuri, 120, 121, f.n., 2. Dr. Chaudhuri is constrained to admit that "the widespread idea that the British rule was fast disappearing induced many chiefs like the rajas of Nagar and Satsi and the zamindars of Amorah to take up arms" (p. 145).
48. The name of none of these is included in the list, given by Gubbins, of the rebel leaders who distinguished themselves by the most active and unprovoked hostility in the early phase of the war. Dr. Chaudhuri also does not refer to their activities in connection with the siege of Lakhnau (Gubbins, 487 ; Chaudhuri, 131-2).
49. William Tayler, *Thirty-eight years in India* (1882), Vol. II. p. 193.
50. *Patna University Journal*, Vol. VIII (1954).
51. *Sambalpur DG*, pp. 26-7. Chaudhuri, 196 ff.
52. See pp. 138 ff.
53. Chaudhuri, 191.
54. Ibid, 90.
55. Holmes, 221.
56. Ibid, 281.
57. See f. n., 30.
58. See p. 193.
59. According to Forbes-Mitchell, there were 70,000 irregular and 60,000 regular mutineers (*Reminiscences*, 195). According to Maude, the number gradually swelled to over 100,000 (*Memories*, II. 449).
59a. Malleson, III. 285.
60. Holmes, 523, f.n. 1. Holmes adds that "the number of armed men, who succumbed in Oudh, was about 150,000, of whom at least 35,000 were sepoys".
61. See pp. 168, 196-7.
62. See pp. 163-5.
63. See p. 206.
64. Holmes, 535.
65. Malleson, III. 221.
66. *SM*, pp. xiii-xiv.
67. Ball, C., *History of the Indian Mutiny*, I. 359.
68. Ibid, 257.

69. Holmes, 220-1.
70. *History of the Siege of Delhi*, by an officer who served there, pp. 59-60.
71. See p. 172.
72. The account is based on Kaye, II. 372-3. But, as Kaye himself admits, authentic evidence is altogether lacking and some obscurity surrounds the terrible incident. The principal witness, John Fitchell, was 'clearly convicted of direct falsehood'. No reliance can be placed on Nanakchand's account. While there is no doubt about the massacre, the gruesome details, particularly the role attributed to Nana, rest upon very insufficient evidence. Dr. S. N. Sen has also come to the same conclusion, after an elaborate discussion (Sen, 158-60).
73. Ball op. cit., I. 390. As regards Neill's statement about "pool of blood still two inches deep" and "the mutilation of women", reference may be made to the following statement of Sherer who was one of the first few to visit Bibighar after the massacre: "The whole of the pavement was thickly caked with blood. Surely this is enough without saying 'the clotted gore lay ankle deep, which, besides being most distressing, is absolutely incorrect". "Of mutilation, in that house at least, there were no signs, nor at that time was there any writing on the walls" (Sen, 160).
74. Martin, R. M., *The Indian Empire*, II. 449,
74a. Holmes, 398.
75. Cooper, Frederick *The Crisis in the Punjab*, 157-64.
76. Ibid, 149.
77. Coupland, R. M., *A Lady's Escape from Gwalior* (London, 1859), p. 243.
78. Martin, II. 485.
79. Majendie, Major, V. D., *Up Among the Pandies*, pp. 195-6.
80. Thompson, E., *The Other Side of the Medal*, 73-4.
81. Majendie, op. cit., 187.
82. Cotton, H., *Indian and Home Memories*, 143.
83. Russell, Sir W. H., *My Diary in India in the Year 1858-9*, II. 43.
84. Ms. L., Vol. 176, p. 635.
85. For the different views about the origin and object of the *chapatis*, cf. Kaye, I. 632 ff. and the evidences given during the trial of Bahadur Shah (*TB*). Dr. P. C. Gupta has dealt with it in detail in *J. N. Banerjea Volume*, pp. 254-5.
86. *TB*, 253-4.
87. Ms. L. Vol. 725, pp. 387 ff. Also cf. Lawrence's Minute dated 19 April, 1858 (Anderson and Subedar, *The Last Days of the Company*, I 111).
88. Lawrence's Minute referred to in f. n., 87.
89. Kaye, I. 653.

90. *Bengal ast and Present*, LXXVI, Part I, p. 63.
91. *TB*, 255.
92. *TB*, 253
93. See pp. 151 ff.
94. Kaye, II. 109.
95. Holmes, 546.
96. Kaye, II. 110; Anderson and Subedar, op. cit., 113.
97. Kaye II. 110.
98. *SAK*. 53.
99. *The Mutinies, the Government and the People* by a Hindu (Calcutta, 1858). Though anonymous, it is now known to be the work of Kishorichand Mitra.
100. *The Mutinies and the People or Statements of Native Fidelity exhibited during the outbreak of 1857-8*, by a Hindu (Calcutta, 1859). Though anonymous, it is now known to be the work of Sambhuchandra Mukhopadhyaya.
101. *A General Biography of Bengal Celebrities, both Living and Dead*, by Ramgopal Sanyal, p. 75.
102. *SAK*, xvi. See above, p. 180.
103. Jiwanlal Munshi, Mainuddin, and Durgadas Bandyopadhyaya, mentioned on p. 178. and footnote 5 above.
103a. Jadunath Sarvadhikari, in his Bengali book, *Tirtha-bhraman* (Pilgrimage), gives a long account of the mutiny and describes the oppressions of the people by the sepoys in Varanasi and other neighbouring places.
104. He recorded his impressions in a book entitled *Majha Prabas* (My Journey), which commenced in March, 1857, and took him to various theatres of military operations. I am indebted to Dr. A. D. Pusalker for having translated for me the relevant portions of this Marathi book in English.
105. Griffiths, P., *The British Impact on India*, p. 259.
106. Ibid.
107. Publisher's Note in the Edition of 1947, p. vii.
108. For his views quoted, cf. Raikes, C., *Notes on the Revolt in the N. W. Provinces of India* (London, 1858), pp. 156 ff.
109. Durgadas Bandyopadhyaya and Jadunath Sarvadhikari; see f. n., 103, 103a.
110. Quoted in N. Ghose's *Krishtadas Pal*, p. 126.
111. *SAK*. 9.
112. Kaye, III, 288.
113. If we accept the current view.
114. *PIHRC*, XXXI, Part II, 180.
115. This does not, of course, mean that the generality of the people

who fought against the English for personal or material interest belonged to the category of the Pindaris. The object is merely to draw attention to the underlying principle by an extreme analogy. But one class of the civil population, who swelled the number of rebels, such as the Gujars, Banjars, Ranghars and other similar predatory tribes, offers a close analogy to the Pindaris.

116. Kaye, III. 290 ff. In addition to the two proclamations of Khan Bahadur Khan of Bareilly, we possess copies of proclamations issued by Bargis Qadr of Awadh and Liaqat Ali of Allahabad, all urging the Muslims to rise against the English in the name of religion.
The Proclamation issued under the seal of Bargis Qadr, Wali of Awadh, addressed to "all the Muslims residing in Oudh, Rampur, Moradabad etc.", begins with a quotation from the Quran from which it draws the conclusion that friendship with Christians is heresy and hence it is a duty of all the Muslims to make themselves inveterate foes of these Christians. Throughout, it contains the exhortation to the Muslims to rise against the English and extirpate them, by holding out the dire consequences that will follow to the Muslims if the English got victory. The Proclamation issued by Khan Bahadur Khan of Bareilly appeals to both Hindus and Muslims to protect their religion and property from the Europeans. The other proclamations are also of a similar character.

117. Sen, 411.

118. Sen, 385 ff.

119. See p. 193.

120. Sen, pp. 407-11.

121. Ibid.

122. Sen, 411.

123. See f. n., 115.

124. See pp. 142-3, 199.

125. See pp. 115 ff.

126. *The Calcutta Journal*, March 11,1822.

127. Official Records.

128. *SAK*. 20.

129. Ibid.

130. Whether the apprehensions of the sepoys were well-founded or not —evidence now available shows that they were not—they were real and very widely spread. The men of the 34th N. I., with whom the whole trouble began, were almost convinced that they would sooner or later be converted to Christianity. It was said that Lord Canning, the Governor-General, left England under a pledge to Lord Palmerston that he would do his best to convert the whole of the native population of India (*The Times*, 10 June, 1857). A

correspondent from N. W. P. wrote to the *Englishman* of Calcutta (1 May, 1857) : "All classes of natives imagine that they were to be converted by force. Amongst the native soldiery this erroneous imagination dangerously exists". (Quoted by Dr. P. C. Gupta in *J. N. Banerjea Volume*, pp. 262-3).

131. Captain Martineau wrote to one of his colleagues on 5 May, 1857 : "I am afraid to say I can detect the near approach of the storm . . . but can't say how, when or where it will break forth . . . here are all the elements of combustion at hand, 100,000 men, sullen, distrustful, fierce, with all their deepest and inmost sympathies as well as worst passions roused, and we thinking to cajole them into good humour by patting them on the back and saying, what a fool you are for making such a fuss about nothing. They no longer believe us. they have passed out of restraint and will be off at a gallop before long." (Home Miscellaneous Series, Vol. 725, pp. 1015-54), quoted by Dr. P. C. Gupta in *J. N. Banerjea Volume*, p. 264.

132. This point has been fully discussed in *SM*, pp. 247 ff. Cf. also P. C. Gupta, op. cit., 260, which also gives the history of the Grease Question from 1854.

133. It was published in London in 1857 and is generally known as the *Red Pamphlet*. The passage quoted occurs in p. 8.

134. Roberts, Field-Marshal, Earl, *Forty-One years in India*, p. 431.

135. Ibid, 49, f. n. Kaye, I. 558, f. n. For other views on this subject, cf. Chaudhuri, 5, f. n., 1.

136. Lecky, *The Map of Life* (1900), p. 98.

137. Quoted by Yusuf Ali, *A Cultural History of India during the British Period*, p. 182.

138. *Bentinck* (R. I.), p. 179.

139. Coopland, op. cit., 234.

140. These causes are enumerated by various writers. Cf. Holmes, Appendix U, pp. 630 ff. For the long list of Norton, cf. *SM*, 260-1. Mr. Martin has given a list of the causes leading to the outbreak. These include, among others, oppressive and pauperising tenure of land, free press, inefficient administration of justice, exclusion of natives from all shares in the Government, aversion of Englishmen to the natives, recent annexations, western education, missionary operations, Muhammadan conspiracy, and Russian and Persian intrigues.

141. Bruce Norton, *Topics for Indian Statesmen* (London, 1858), p. 56.

142. Anderson and Subedar, *The Last Days of the Company*, Vol. I, 114.

BOOK I, CHAPTER VIII.

1. *PIHC*., XXXI. 176-81.
2. *HCIP*., IX. 890.
3. *TB*., 271.
3a. Hunter, *Annals of Rural Bengal*, p. 15.
4. *HCIP*., IX. 892.
4a. Hunter, op. cit.
5. The account is based on *HCIP*., IX. 901-04.
6. The account is based on *HCIP*., IX. 904-07
7. The account is based on *HCIP*., IX. 907-08.
8. See p. 126.
9. *Landmarks of the Freedom Struggle in Assam*, by K. N. Dutt, pp. 25-34.
10. See p. 199 ; also cf. *HCIP*., IX. 144, 950-51.

BOOK II, CHAPTER I.

1. The name is usually spelt as 'Brahmo Samaj' by its followers. But the actual Bengali name should, aceording to modern usage, be written as 'Brahma Samaj.'
2. Sastri, Sivanath, *History of the Brahmo Samaj*, I. 72.
3. Ibid, 99.
4. Pal, B. C., *Memoirs of My Life and Times*, Vol. II, p. xv.
5. Ibid, xii.
6. Ibid, xiii.
7. Pal, B. C., *The Brahmo Samaj and the Battle of Swaraj in India*, pp. 13-14. I am indebted to this and other works of the same author for the observations made above.
8. Ibid, 19-20.
9. The account of the Arya Samaj is principally based on the *Arya Samaj* by Lajpat Rai.
10. Pal, B. C., *Memoirs*, II. xxxvi-xl.
11. Ibid, 426.
12. Ibid,

12a. Cf. Bentinck's Minute dated 8 November, 1829 (Keith, A. B., *Speeches and Documents on Indian Policy*, I. 214).

13. For the views of Ranade and quotations from his speeches, which are contained in this chapter, cf. *Religious and Social Reform,—A Collection of Essays and Speeches by M. G. Ranade*, Compiled by A. B. Koleskar ; C. Y. Chintamani, *Indian Social Reform*, II. 85-95.

14. Natarajan, S., *A Century of Social Reform in India*, p. 64.

15. The following account is principally based upon the following works :
    1. Barns, Margarita, *The Indian Press*.
    2. O'Malley, L. S. S., (Ed.), *Modern India and the West*, Chapter V, written by W. C. Wordsworth.
    3. Banerji, Brajendranath, *Sambadpatre Sekaler Katha* (in Bengali).

16. Gleig, *Life of Munro*, II. 106-7.

17. O'Malley, op. cit., 205.

18. Ibid, 197.

19. Ibid, 198-9.

20. Ibid, 198.

21. Ibid.

22. *Raja Rajendralal Mitra's Speeches*, edited by Jogeshur Mitra, p. 25.

23. B. Majumdar, *History of Political Thought*, p. 164.

24. Ibid, pp. 474-489, where long extracts from the petition are quoted. A good account of the nature and activities of the British Indian Association is given by Sujata Ghosh in the *Report of the Regional Records Survey Committee for West Bengal* (1957-8),

BOOK II, CHAPTER II.

1. Mill, J. S., *Representative Government*, quoted in Griffiths, P., *The British Impact on India*, pp. 237-8.

2. See p. 51.

3. Heber, Reginald, *Narrative of a Journey from Calcutta to Bombay, 1824-5*, I. 440.

4. *Works of Rammohan Roy*, Panini Office, p. xix.

5. Ibid, xv.

6. Ibid.

7. For an account of Derozio and the students of the Hindu College, cf. B. Majumdar, *History of Political Thought*, Chapter II ; *Studies in the Bengal Renaissance*, edited by Atulchandra Gupta, pp. 16-32.

8. B. Majumdar, op. cit., 85-6.

9. Mill, J., *The History of British India*, 5th Ed. (1858). II. 109.
10. *Bengal Past and Present*, LXVII (1948), pp. 40-45.
11. Pal, B. C., *Memoirs of My Life and Times*. I. 229. For Keshab Chandra Sen, see above, pp. 292-5.
12. See above, p. 293.
13. Cotton, Sir Henry, *Indian and Home Memories*, p. 222.
14. Pal, op. cit., I. 315, II. xv.
15. Ibid. I. 237.
16. For the full text of the document, cf. *Modern Review*, June. 1944. pp. 444 ff.
17. *Atma-parichaya* (in Bengali).
18. B. Majumdar, op. cit., 293-4
19. Pal, op. cit., I. 263.
20. Ibid 261-2.
20a. Translated from original Bengali.
20b. Translated from original Bengali (*Vividha*—Sahitya Parishad edition pp. 329-30.)
21. Pal, op. cit., I. 310-14.
22. Ibid, II. 66.
23. Ibid, II. 70.
24. Sarda, H. B., *Dayananda*, p. cxxii.
25. It may be noted that Keshab Chandra Sen and Bhudev Mukhopadhyaya recommended Hindi as national language, and several others recommended the use of *swadeshi* (indigenous) goods before Dayananda.
26. Pal, op. cit., I. 425.
27. Ibid, II. LV.
28. See p. 281.
29. Pal, op. cit., I. 227-8.
30. Ibid, 228-9.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid, 256.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid, 242-3.
35. Ibid. 245-6.
36. Ibid, 246-7.
37. *Speeches and Writings of Surendra Nath Banerji*, 227-31.
38. Pal, op. cit., I. 235.
39. Ranade's views on social reform have been discussed above, on pp. 301-2.
40. See pp. 333 ff.
41. Andrews and Mukherji, *The Rise and Growth of the Congress*, p. 60.
42. *Complete Works of Vivekananda*, IV. 408-13.
43. Pradhan, R. G., *India's Struggle for Swaraj*, p. 60.
44. *Speeches of Gokhale*, Appendix, pp. 182-4.
45. Ibid.

BOOK II, CHAPTER III.

1. *Nation*, p. 67.
2. See pp. 318-9.
3. Ramgopal Sanyal, *A General Biography of Bengal Celebrities both Living and Dead*, p. 41.
4. The *Free Lance*, Puja Issue, 1957 ; also cf. H. P. Ghosh, *The Congress* p. 33.
5. Bagal J. C., *History of the Indian Association*, p. 8.
6. Ibid, 10.
7. *Nation*, p. 41.
8. Ibid, 42.
9. Ibid, 44.
10. Ibid, 44-51.
11. Bagal, op. cit., pp. 34-8.
12. *Nation*, p. 54.
13. Blunt, W. S., *India under Ripon, a Private Diary*, pp. 100, 273.
14. Mazumdar, A. C., *Indian National Evolution*, p. 38.
15. *Nation*, pp. 74-84 ; Bagal, 59-60.
16. *Nation*, 81, 85. Bagal (61-3) gives a fuller, but slightly different account.
17. Bagal, 80-1.
18. Blunt, op. cit., 114, 116.
19. For an account of the National Conference, cf. Bagal, 80-8 ; *Nation*, 86,98.
20. Mody, H. P., *Ferozeshah Mehta*, I. 130-1, 108-9, 92.
21. Mazumdar, op. cit., p. 6.
22. Mody, 166-8.
23. Started originally under the name 'Poona Association' in 1867. The new name was adopted three years later.
24. Mitra, Kishorichand, *Memoirs of Dwarakanath Tagore*, pp. 88 ff.
25. See p. 316.
26. Masani, R. P., *Dadabhai Naoroji, the Grand Old Man of India*, p. 224.
27. *Modern Review*, December, 1948, p. 463.
28. Sarkar, H. C., *Anandamohan Bose*, p. 35.

BOOK II, CHAPTER IV.

1. *History of the Indian National Congress*, by P. Sitaramayya, Vol. I, p. 11.
2. See p. 378.
3. *Nation*, 98.
4. Mazumdar A. C., *Indian National Evolution*, p. 40.
5. This has been fully discussed in the author's book, *Glimpses of Bengal in the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 93-5.
6. Hume, Allan Octavian, by W. Wedderburn, p. 50.
7. Ibid, 79.
8. Ibid, 80-1.
9. Introduction to *Indian Politics*, published by G. Natesan Co. Also, *History of the Indian National Congress*, pp. 22-4.
10. Lord Dufferin's Speech at the St. Andrews Day Dinner, Calcutta, 30 November, 1888, quoted in the *Indian Historical Quarterly*, XXXI, pp, 148-50. For the full text of the speech, cf. Lord Dufferin, *Speeches Delivered in India, 1884-8* (London, 1890), 237-44.
11. Hume, 101.
12. Ibid, 77.
13. For Dr. Chatterji's view, cf. *Journal of Indian History*, XXXVI, 172 ; also *Modern Review*, October, 1950, p. 273.
14. See p. 375.
15. F. M. De Mello, *The Indian National Congress*, p. 2.
16. Pal, B. C., *Memoirs*, II. 13-14.
17. Malleson, G. B., *The Indian Mutiny of 1857*, 4th Edition, p. 412. The book was first published in 1890.
18. *Nation*, 87.
19. See f. n., 10.
20. Ibid.
21. Hume, 53.
22. Besant, Annie, *How India Wrought f0r Freedom*, p. 15.
23. Malleson, op. cit. p. 412.
24. Syed Ahmad Khan, *On the Present State of Indian Politics*, pp. 11-12.
25. Unpublished records in the Commonwealth Relations Office, London
26. Pal, *Memoirs*, II. 35-41.
27. Hume, 61-2.
28. Congress Proceedings, 1886-91 ; A. C. Mazumdar, op. cit., 72.
29. For details, cf. Hume, 64 ff.

30. Pal, *Memoirs*, II. 48-52.
31. This amendment of Munshi Hidayat Rasul was rejected by the Muslim Delegates ; 16 voted for, and 23 against, the proposal while the great bulk did not vote.
32. See pp. 318 ff.
33. *Report of the Regional Records Survey Committee. West Bengal* (1957-8), pp. 42-3.
34. Appendix to the *Proceedings of the First Session of the Congress*, pp. 80-2. Italics mine.
35. See f. n., 10.
36. Unpublished Records, C. R. O., London.

BOOK II, CHAPTER V.

1. Prof. Haridas Mukherjee and Prof. Uma Mukherjee, *Sri Aurobindo's Political Thought*, pp. 75-6.
2. *Essay on Bankim Chandra Chatterji*, published on 27 August, 1894. Reprint (Pondicherry, 1954). p, 47,
3. Lajpat Rai, *Young India*, p. 146.
4. Ibid, 140-44.
5. See pp. 330 ff.
6. *Studies in the Bengal Renaissance*, edited by Atul Gupta, p. 210.
7. M. A. Buch, *Rise and Growth of Indian Militant Nationalism*, pp. 83-5.
8. Athalye, *Lokmanya Tilak*, pp. 84-5.
9. Kelkar, *Tilak*, 285-6.
10. Karmarkar, *Tilak*, 215.
11. For Shivaji Festival, cf. Kelkar, 290 ff., 367 ff. ; Athalye, 105 ff.
12. Buch, op., cit., 28-9.
13. Ibid, 30.
14. Athalye, 106.
15. Buch, 25.
16. Ibid, 26.
17. Ibid, 24.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid, 186.
20. Some passages of Arabinda's lecture, from which this extract is quoted, are given in a Bengali book, *Bharat-Purush Sri Arabinda*, by Upendra Chandra Bhattacharya, pp. 95-8.
21. Ibid, 133.

22. *Young India*, 86.
23. Buch, 90-91.
24. Ibid, 93.
25. See p. 346.
26. See p. 340.
27. Part of the Bande Mataram song sung before.
28. From the *English translation of Anandamath*, by Arabinda Ghose.
28a. *Studies in the Bengal Renaissance* Edited by Atul Gupta, p. 210.
29. See p. 347.
30. Autobiography of Rabindra Nath (in Bengali).
31. Pal, B. C., *Memoirs of My Life and Times*, I. 246-8.
32. The account of Phadke that follows is primarily based on his biography by V. S. Joshi.
33. See pp. 426 ff.
34. *Report of the Sedition Committee*, presided over by Justice Rowlatt (1918). p. 1.
35. Ibid, 2.
36. *Sri Aurobindo on himself*, later incorporated in a bigger book entitled *Sri Aurobindo on himself and on the Mother*, published by the Pondicherry Asram.
37. This is based on the account given in the Appendix (pp. 179 ff.) of the Bengali book, *Bharater Dvitiya Svadhinata Sangrama*, Vol. I. by Bhupendra Nath Datta, and another account given by Abinash Chandra Bhattacharya on p. 190 of the same book.
38. This date is not correct. According to official records (I. B. Department, LN 54-A, p. 1), Jatindra came to Calcutta towards the end of 1901 A. D. The Club, referred to later, was. however started in 1902, as mentioned in the statement.
39. The account of Arabinda is based upon his autobiography, referred to in f. n., 36.
40. See p. 420
41. The role played by Nivedita in the early revolutionry movement in Bengal has been, of late, a subject of keen dispute. A French writer, Madam Lizelle Raymand, has represented Nivedita as the chief leader of all the revolutionary activities in Bengal, and this view has been accepted by some writers in this country. But there is no evidence in support of it, and all that we definitely know about her goes against it. It was held on the basis of a statement made by Arabinda that Nivedita was a member of the first Executive Committee of the Anusilan Samiti, as noted above. But the statement of Arabinda, when closely scrutinized, cannot be regarded as a conclusive evidence on this point. Arabinda refers to the active sympathy and support of Nivedita to his idea of establishing a revolutionary organization in

Bengal and then adds that he was trying to set up a Committee of five, including Nivedita, under the Chairmanship of P. Mitra. But there is nothing to show that Nivedita was a member of the Committee which was actually set up.

The view that Nivedita took a leading part in the revolutionary movement in and after 1905-6, and particularly in the publication of the *Yugantar*, is almost certainly wrong.

BOOK II, CHAPTER VI.

1. See pp, 52 ff.
2. See p. 324.
3. *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 12 August, 1869, quoted by Bagal, J. C., in *Bharatbarsher Svadhinata* (in Bengali). p. 177.

3a. See p. 281.

4. See pp. 315 ff., 367 ff.
5. Majumdar, B., *History of Political Thought*, pp. 392-3.
6. Blunt, W. S., *India under Ripon*, p. 27.
7. Ibid, 94.
8. Ibid, 115-6.

8a. See pp. 373-5.

9. Ibid, 103-4.
10. Ibid, 107-9.
11. Ibid, 109-12.
12. Ibid, 121.
13. *Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Council*, 3 May, 1883, quoted by B. Majumdar, op. cit., 398-9.
14. B. Majumdar, 211-2.
15. Blunt, 163.
16. Ibid, 165.
17. Ibid, 112.
18. Adam's *Report on Education*, p. 248.
19. Pal, B. C., *Memoirs*, I. 417.
20. Hunter, W. W., *The Indian Musalmans* p. 3.
21. Sen, Sachin, *The Birth of Pakistan*, p. 42.
22. Prasad, Rajendra, *India Divided*, p, 100.
23. *Nation*, 41 ; Sen, Sachin, op. cit., 48.
24. R. Coupland quotes the relevant extracts from this speech (*The Constitutional Problem in India*, Part I, pp. 154-6).

25. Syed Ahmad Khan, *Akhari Madamin* (Urdu), pp. 46-50, translated into English in *Sources of Indian Tradition*, pp. 746-7.
26. *Aligarh Institute Gazette*, 21 July, 1888, pp, 811-13.
27. Prasad, op. cit,, 104.
28. Ibid, 103-4.
29. Ibid, 104-5.
30. Mehta, Asok, and Patwardhan, Achyut, *The Communal Triangle in India*, p. 59. Ramgopal, *Indian Muslims*, p. 72.
31. Ghosh, P. C., *Indian National Congress* pp. 148-9.
32. *History of the Congress*, by P. Sitaramayya, I. 67.
33. *Nation*, 108.
34. Hoyland, *Gokhale* (Builders of Modern India series), 160.
35. Noman, Mohammad, *Rise and Growth of the All India Muslim League*. p. 40.
36. Ghosh, P. C., op. cit., 151-52.
37. Bahadur, Lal, *Muslim League*, p. 4.
38. Ibid, 5. Italics mine.
38a. Ibid, pp. *25-26*.
38ab. Cf. pp. 466-7.
38b. *Muslim League*. p. 25.
38c. Cf. pp. *35*-6.
39. Rai, Lajpat, *Unhappy India*, 403-4. Prasad, Rajendra, op. cit., p. 87.
40. Colchester, *Ellenborough*, quoted by Lajpat Rai, op. cit., 400.
41. Lord Dufferin, the Viceroy (1884-1888), officially enunciated the theory of the Muslims forming a separate nation in India (*Modern Review* 1911, Part I, p. 303). Cf. p. 477.
41a. Cf. pp. *32* ff.
41b. Cf. pp.248-9.
42. *Report of the Indian Statutory Commission*, 1930, Vol. IV, Part I, pp. 96-7. Cumming, *Political India*, p. 110.
43. Masani, A. P. *Dadabhai Naoroji* pp. 62 ff.
44. Modi, H. P., *Pherozeshah Mehta*, pp. 81-88.
45. Buckland, C. E., *Bengal under the Lieutenant-Governors*, II. 952.
46. Ibid, 1004.

APPENDIX.

1. Referring to the Resolution passed by the I. H. R. C. at the Jaipur session (1948), he observes in his 'Foreword' to the *History of the Freedom Movement in India* by Tara Chand, Vol. I (p. vii): "At the very first meeting of the Indian Historical Records Commission held after India became free, a resolution was passed for preparing an authentic and comprehensive history of the different phases of the Indian struggle for independence. This recommendation found an immediate response from the late Maulana Abul Kalam Azad who directed that steps should forthwith be taken to give effect to it."
2. I. H. R. C. Proceedings, Vol. XXVII, Part I, pp. 95-6.
3. Ibid, 96.
4. Cf. the quotation in f. n., 1. Italics is mine.
5. Rajya Sabha Debates: Questions and Answers, Vol. IX, nos. 1-27, February 21—March 30, 1955, March 22, 1955, pp. 2681-83.
6. *History of the Freedom Movement in India* by Tara C . Vol. I, pp. xii-xiii.
7. Janab Kabir says:

   "The Board functioned for a period of three years and with the help of its regional committees, collected a large volume of material." Except this and the passage quoted on p. 511 above, that almost immediately follows, nothing further is said about the actual work of the Board. I leave it to the reader to judge whether Janab Kabir gives a fair account of the work done by the Board, even to the extent that was officially recognized in the Parliament, as stated above.
8. See above, p. 503
9. Tara Chand, op. cit., p. viii.
10. There is no evidence of any serious difference before Dr. Tara Chand's note was discussed on 28th March, 1955. But he was not a member of the Board, and, as noted above, even after the note was discussed the Board did not take any step to amend the draft, already generally approved, in deference to the views of Dr. Tara Chand. There was some difference between me and the Secretary regarding the collection of materials, but it was settled without any reference to the Board.

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